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ABSTRACT

A librarian's view of the Mohican Youth Camp (MYC) and the Ohio penal system for youthful offenders provides information about these institutions and their library services. The report first describes existing treatment and institutions and gives the author's opinions as to how to make constructive changes in both public attitudes and the system, of which he is highly critical. The counter-productiveness of the mass conformity imposed on the boys in the camp is emphasized. There follows a discussion of libraries in such institutions, the narrow, protected places they often are and the open, idea-producing places they ought to be. The author describes his attempts to give the library a real, rather than institutional, atmosphere and to engage the boys' enthusiasm by making them participants in the library with projects that ranged from cleaning windows to selecting books and music criticism. He concludes, however, that since the library is part of a controlling institution, it cannot perform its major function--teaching the boys to take control of their lives. (LS)

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A Thesis

entitled

One Time Through The Revolving Door:

An Ohio Youth Commission Librarian's Report

by

Randall John Menakes

as partial fulfillment of the requirements of
the Master of Arts Degree in Library
and Information Services

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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February 1975

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INTRODUCTION

> Control and punishment, not treatment and rehabilitation, are what the public <u>really</u> demands. And what it gets is an anonymous army of a million or more throwaways who, with the stealth of a nighttime convoy, are being shipped out--destination unknown.
>
> Lisa Aversa Richette
> <u>The Throwaway Children</u>

For sixteen weeks in the spring and summer of 1973, I was employed as librarian at the Mohican Youth Camp--one of the unknown destinations to which Ms. Richette refers. This thesis is an attempt to report on that experience and to pass along any knowledge and insight I may have gained.

The Mohican Youth Camp is one of eleven juvenile correctional institutions administrated by the Ohio Youth Commission. Located in Mohican State Park some twenty miles southeast of Mansfield, Ohio, MYC is designed to serve thirteen to eighteen-year-old boys assigned to the Youth Commission by the juvenile courts of Ohio. The camp is generally filled to its capacity of 120 boys, about one-third of whom are black. Crimes represented range from petty theft and drug possession to rape and murder.

My employment at MYC began as a ten-week internship, which represents one quarter's work in the Community Information Specialist Program in the Department of Library and Information Services at the University of Toledo. At the completion of those ten weeks, I was

asked by the educational director of the camp to stay on as permanent librarian. I accepted the position and continued to serve as librarian for an additional six weeks, at which time I tendered my resignation and moved back to Toledo.

This thesis has two primary purposes. First, it is designed to provide some kind of feedback to the administration at MYC and within the Ohio Youth Commission. Second, it is intended as helpful reading to others who might be about to begin employment in the same, or another similar position. It is particularly aimed at future students of the Community Information Specialist Program at the University of Toledo. To that end, it is really a combination of warnings, encouragements, strategies and tactics.

In planning for this thesis, my temptation has been to move outside my range of competency (i.e., library and information services), and to concern myself with all areas of juvenile corrections as they apply to MYC. The library at the camp is only one component of the total social and physical environment. No part of that complex system is independent of the others, and I believe it would be reckless to try to describe the library without also looking at outside factors which influence its operations, its character, and its effects on the camp's population. Similarly, a look at the boys' use of and behavior in the library would be fairly meaningless, were other inputs not examined, as well. In one sense, a "user study" of the MYC library might be less difficult than those generally done in public and academic libraries. In the latter situations, it's impossible to identify most of the activities which fill a library patron's day and influence his behavior. MYC, on the other hand, is far more closed a system, and the boys committed there are, indeed, a "captive" audience.

The full range of their daily activities and influences can be described with fairly high accuracy, and for me to ignore those other factors would be faulty reporting, at best.

I wish to assure the reader that I'm not totally unequipped to deal with the broader issues of juvenile corrections, however. I have, of course, read extensively in the area. Much of my work at MYC took me outside the library doors and involved me directly in the area of treatment in its most rigorous sense. I served the full sixteen weeks, for example, on one of the camp's "treatment teams," a concept which will be described in detail in the body of this thesis. Furthermore, much of the training I received in the Community Information Specialist Program was designed, specifically, to provide the student with models and methodologies for investigating just such areas.

Finally, I wish to refer the reader to a thesis entitled "Library and Information Service for Incarcerated Youth at Mohican Youth Camp," written by Theresa Jones, also for the Department of Library and Information Services of the University of Toledo. Ms. Jones worked for five years at MYC, first as an English teacher and later, after construction of the library, as the full-time librarian. Although her thesis was not completed until after my employment with the Ohio Youth Commission, it has been a most useful tool in the preparation of this paper. My thesis does not attempt to duplicate what she has written, nor would I try to improve upon her remarks; her knowledge of the camp far exceeds mine. The only corrections I have made are in those few cases where operations have changed since her employment there.

CHAPTER I

"TREATMENT" AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

> Oftentimes have I heard you speak of one who commits a wrong as though he were not one of you, but a stranger unto you and an intruder upon your world.
>
> Kahlil Gibran
> The Prophet

One overriding factor taints all aspects of life at Mohican Youth Camp--its setting. The boys aren't where they belong, where they want to be, where they can grow healthily, or where they can learn the intricacies of living in a complex urban environment. Mohican State Park is ideal for vacationing--no city sounds, no city smells, no city hustle, no city jive. But to be held there against your will is a city-dweller's nightmare. (For an intimate description of the entire area, I again refer the reader to Ms. Jones' thesis.) Compound the foreignness of the setting with the distressing demands of institutional living, and you've created a situation that anyone would recognize as counter-productive to rehabilitation.

If we continue removing juvenile offenders from their communities and placing them in rural settings, there will always, of course, be a need for mass-custodial institutions like MYC. No one's going to hang around without surveillance, and that spells "institution." The only choice is where on the punishment-rehabilitation continuum the institution claims to operate. Certainly there

are large juvenile correctional institutions located in urban areas--the Ohio Youth Commission has several--but there needn't be. The growing number of successful halfway houses for juveniles is sufficient proof. The reasons for their success are self-evident. Most important is the removal of the artificial demands of institutionalization. Treatment is more intensive and more individualized. The child's sense of identity is encouraged, not obliterated. And he learns to cope first-hand with the enrivonment in which he will spend the rest of his life.

The Ohio Youth Commission has made overtures in this direction. There now exist several halfway houses scattered throughout Ohio, some operating partially on OYC funding. But the monster of institutionalism itself remains, in fact continues to grow. "These things take time," the monster mumbles. They needn't. Massachussetts, three years ago, decided to close its juvenile institutions and simply did so. Houses were purchased and rented, and community-based treatment began. The effects were clear when Harvard University published, earlier this year, its findings on the rate of recidivism among juvenile offenders in Massachussetts. Before the change in operations, the state's juvenile recidivism rate was about that of the national average--65-75 percent. Today the rate for boys is about 20 percent, and for girls, about 30 percent.

If that doesn't mean anything to the Ohio Youth Commission, you might think the monetary benefits would. It costs about twice as much to keep a child in a reform school as it does in a halfway house. The cost of keeping a child in Hastings House in Cambridge, for example is $7,600 per annum. It would cost the state $11,600 to keep

him in a reform school. Hastings House has one social worker for every two boys, Mohican Youth Camp has one for every thirty boys.

It's difficult to imating why the Ohio Youth Commission continues in the direction it does. One reason, I have been told, is that most communities aren't willing to accept a house full of juvenile delinquents in their midst. Gibran also recognized the problem. The solution, of course, is for the OYC to direct its attention and massive operating budget to the education of the public.

I feel like I should stop there, tack on a bibliography, and call this thesis complete. There's no need to talk about the library position at MYC because the job's obsolete--the whole system is obsolete. There might be some value in documenting the experience for historical record, but I'd rather forget it--write it off like we've written off debtor's prison. We're damaging the hell out of kids, and society is worse off for it. But until society accepts that knowledge, it will probably demand that we maintain the "nighttime convoy--destination unknown." So while the rails remain, I'll lead the reader along them and show him what I found.

There are basically two models used to induce change in behaviors which are considered anti-social. The first consists of forcing a person to act differently, usually through a system of rewards and punishment, and then getting those new behavior patterns to persist over time, thereby producing a change in attitudes. The alternative is to first change the person's attitudes and beliefs, so that a change in behavior will necessarily follow. There is certainly no agreement among authorities over which method is most productive. Neither is easy, because attitude change is really at the heart of both.

The question at hand is which approach is utilized at MYC. A cursory investigation might indicate that both are, but after sixteen weeks at the camp and several months of reflection, I would suggest that neither is. Some rewarding goes on, and a terrific amount of punishment, but their purpose is simply to maintain some kind of order in a most chaotic situation. Little effort is made to insure that productive behavior will persist--the more important part of the formula from a rehabilitative standpoint. In fact truly productive behavior is rarely encouraged at all. Compliance is the name of the game at MYC, as it is, nearly by definition, at all mass-custody institutions.

Meaningful attempts to induce real attitude change are in even less evidence. Staff members are always hot to lay their raps on the boys, but this reveals an incredible naïveté of the role of change agent. The primarily rural-raised staff either cannot or will not acknowledge the understandable distance between their values and those of the boys. One of the change agent's first goals is to accomplish a degree of identification with the boys, and the staff's excessive employment of punishment and rare use of rewards can only create resistance to such identification. Should identification occur despite these factors, the model presented is of an adult who uses force and retaliation to gain his desired ends.

The question of who's hired and how arises. Nearly the entire staff has been raised in the area. Bright young professionals find it difficult to live in an environment devoid of the city's cultural and social benefits. Staff competence, therefore, is often lower than it should be. The social worker with whom I worked, for example, (her case load was thirty boys) had only a bachelor's degree--and in Spanish!

Perhaps the most shameful aspect of the large staff was its racial composition. Not a single Black was employed at the camp. I was told that open positions were widely advertised throughout the state, and occasionally Blacks would arrive at the camp for interviews. None ever joined our ranks. I was repeatedly assured that qualified Blacks just couldn't be found. That may be a valid excuse in some situations, but the position of Youth Leader, for example, (about twenty men are so employed at MYC) doesn't even require a high school diploma.

The formal means of treatment at MYC is the "treatment team"--a concept which appears to be modeled after that devised within the California Youth Authority. A treatment team is composed of the boy's social worker, a school representative, and the Youth Leaders of the boy's dormitory. The team has many responsibilities. It handles all incident reports against the boys, referees conflicts between boys and the staff, and most important, controls each boy's movement through and out of the system.

Each boy, upon his arrival, is assigned to "Orientation" for a period of two weeks. This is to provide him with time to "adjust" and to learn the basic rules of the camp, like "No smoking between classes" and "No running away." The boy is then given the "rap" about "working his way out" and assigned to one of the "treatment dorms," with the status of "Novice." He and his social worker work out a "contract"--a list of goals written in behavioral terms. Typical goals are:

"I will achieve a 2.5 grade average in school."

"I will refrain from sucker-punching my peers."

"I will not sit near Joe Smith."

"I will avoid all talk of going AWOL."

Such is the stuff that rehabilitation is made of.

One of the camp's basic rules is that each boy will carry his goals with him at all times. Forgetting them can mean punishment. Attached to a boy's goals are sheets of paper for staff comments. A staff member can demand to see and, if he so desires, to sign the contract at any time. A boy can also solicit comments when he thinks they might be favorable. A contract, typed on regular bond paper, is a boy's ticket to the outs. Contracts are priceless items in this mutated society, but they are fragile items and easily fall apart. The only way to assure that they remain intact is to cover them with scotch tape. Scotch tape from the camp is forbidden the boys. To be caught filching it means punishment. So go the double binds. Classically. (The librarian, I mention in passing, has unlimited access to scotch tape. It's a tool of the trade.)

When a boy's social worker feels the time is right, the Novice goes before his treatment team for review. After a period of discussion with the boy, each member of the team votes to either promote or not promote. If passed, the boy becomes a Journeyman, with a new set of Journeyman goals. The process begins again with a new contract, a new search for scotch tape, and another chance before the treatment team. The next step is Citizen, with a Citizen contract. Each advancement in the system provides a boy with additional privileges. He is permitted more personal possessions, more freedom of movement within the camp. Each promotion also entitles the boy to a home visit--first for three days, then five. Home passes are usually welcomed gifts. Occasionally they aren't. In some cases, returning to MYC after a few days of freedom is so traumatic that the boys don't trust themselves not to run. In others, their home situations are so grotesque that the boys

refuse to relinquish the relative security of the camp, even for a short period.

Besides promoting or not promoting a boy, the treatment team can also choose to demote him if it feels so inclined. This understandably, is one of the worst things that can befall a boy. His privileges are reduced and his period of incarceration is considerably lengthened.

When a Citizen is finally promoted, he becomes "pre-release," awaiting only placement on the outs, which is his social worker's duty.

In short, the whole scheme is virtually beyond explication. Every boy has a thousand questions about his current and approaching status. Guidance is sought everywhere, but only one person really knows the answers. "You'll have to ask your social worker," is heard every hour of every day. Because of the huge size of each social worker's case load, appointments must be set up far in advance. The little time a social worker can devote to any one boy is spent answering meaningless questions. Absolutely no time is available for the intensive one-to-one kind of counseling necessary if a boy's set of beliefs and attitudes is to be constructively altered. The poor alternative to such sessions is the massive "group meeting," which shall be discussed shortly.

To staff members, treatment team review periods are only two or three hours a week away from their duties. To the boys, it's something quite different. Stuttering often sets in, sweating always. Staff members see even the unbroken, finally, break; the toughs, finally, crawl; the disrespectful, finally, oblige. The odds, for one thing, are against the boys--they're outnumbered by five or six to one.

During my employment, I served as the school representative on the Richland Hall treatment team, headed by the Spanish major (Richland Hall is one of the camp's dormitories). Three weeks before I resigned, the team concept was altered slightly. It was felt that co-ordination among the various camp departments was poor. In order to give members of the educational staff more input into and understanding of the treatment process, they all began to attend treatment team sessions. Consequently, each team received two or three additional teachers, bringing the total size of each group to eight or more. Going before treatment team became that much more threatening and that much less likely to produce any positive results. Fear is not conducive to the delicate process of attitude change.

Occasionally, in the midst of a hearing, a boy will realize from the discussion that he's not going to pass. He is likely to become sarcastic, even pugnacious. He will swear and refuse to answer questions asked of him. Finding his situation hopeless in one sense, he is also free, perhaps for the first time, to say exactly what he feels. There's little to lose. Rather than utilizing this rare moment of complete honesty to pursue some of the boy's sources of hostility, the team dismisses him and sends him back to his dorm, sometimes in handcuffs, to cool off.

More often, however, a boy is sent before the treatment team only when it has been previously agreed that he will pass. It is meant to be a time of recognition. Everyone feels good--the staff because they have displayed publicly their good will, the boy because he's that much closer to getting out. Each team member comments on the boy's behavior, and the boy, in turn, listens with careful heed.

Even when the remarks are negative, the boy knows he may gain some insight into how he might better indulge that staff member in the future.

Because of the boy's attentiveness in this situation, great damage to his self-image can be done by a careless member of the treatment team. Shortly before I quit my job at MYC, for example, a boy was sitting before our team, being promoted from Citizen to "pre-release." He was on his way home. He was pleased, and his very black face showed it. Also sitting on the treatment team was the school's science teacher. He was a bigot and everyone knew it--or at least all of the boys did. My very first day on the job, he warned me to watch out for the black kids. "A nigger is a nigger is a nigger," he confided. "There are Blacks, there are niggers, and there are Negroes. I respect Negroes because they respect me." I didn't quite understand what he was saying, but I knew where he was coming from. When I suggested to him that he sounded racist, he assured me that he never let it affect his conduct in the classroom. Fat Chance! When it came time for the science teacher to comment at the hearing, he felt compelled to say, "I'm going to pass you, L., but only because I don't think we can do anything more for you. Within the next two years I expect to read in the newspaper that you've been sent to the state pen. Maybe you'll prove me wrong, but I doubt it." Perhaps the teacher, in his own perverse way, thought the challenge to "straighten out" had some mystic type of rehabilitative power. I do know that if the same remarks had been made on the outs, that teacher would have been swallowing teeth. I suppose some other white "honky" will have to pay for what L. was made to feel that

afternoon in 1973. (I'm happy to report that the science teacher has since left the Ohio Youth Commission for a higher paying job with the military.)

The treatment team was originally an integral part of the large group counseling meetings, begun at MYC in 1968. All thirty boys, along with their treatment team, were assembled in the recreation area of each dormitory. Group meetings were held once or twice a week. Complete honesty was encouraged. Boys could say whatever they felt without the threat of "write-ups." Theresa Jones states in her thesis that the original intent of these meetings was to:

1. Serve as a vehicle for communication between boys and staff.
2. Provide an atmosphere in which new ways of learning and meeting one's needs could be explored.
3. Provide an atmosphere in which a boy would feel free enough to express himself honestly, and in a socially acceptable way.
4. Provide an atmosphere in which the boys could see how healthy adults function.
5. Serve as a forum in which problems of daily living could be worked on and solved.
6. Serve as a forum in which problems concerning the camp's school could be discussed and solved.

By the time I began working at the camp, treatment teams no longer attended group meetings. They were held in the evening, so only the social worker and the one or two Youth Leaders on duty were present. The lack of at least one school representative was a serious fault in

the group meeting structure, because a considerable number of the problems the boys were experiencing centered around the school program. At least half of the incident reports written came from the educational staff. Misbehavior, of course, is much more troublesome in the classroom situation. Furthermore, the boys at MYC spend far more time in school than do their counterparts on the outs. Classes began at 9:00 A. M. and lasted until 4:00 P. M. with no breaks except for lunch. And these were boys who, almost without exception, had had difficulty coping with school prior to their commitment.

Only once during my sixteen-week employment at MYC did members of the teaching staff attend a Richland Hall group meeting. Nearly all of the school-connected problems seemed to center around two teachers--the science teacher and the social studies teacher. Boys had been complaining of differential treatment, excessive punishment for minor infractions, racial discrimination (even the white kids supported their black dorm-mates on this point), burdensome assignments, and the withholding of information on their progress in class. One-to-one discussions between the boys and the two men didn't seem to be helping at all. Finally the boiling point was reached, and the social worker wisely suggested that I ask the two teachers to stay after work one evening to participate in a group meeting. Later that week the two teachers and I stayed for dinner at the camp, and at 6:45 P. M. we went back to Richland Hall.

A large circle of some forty chairs was formed, and each of us took a seat. The two teachers sat side by side, pulling their chairs back slightly from the circle. I sat down between D. and S. Each of the boys had a full pack of cigarettes and I was clean out. I could tell from the atmosphere that I'd be needing a few.

The social worker explained the ground rules for everyone's benefit. The boys would be permitted total candor--nothing expressed was to be held against them. After explaining the purpose of the evening's meeting, she opened the floor for discussion. I was pleasantly surprised at her acumen in conducting the group meeting, considering, particularly, her degree in Spanish. I was also impressed with the honesty and perception that the boys demonstrated in regard to themselves, their peers, the staff, and their situation. I was equally impressed with the improbity of the two teachers in their responses to the boys. My feeling is they were too much on their guard to really "listen." Much of what they heard was picayune, some was unjustified--certainly all of it was unpleasant to sit through. But they weren't taking advantage of some very open feedback that few teachers ever have the opportunity to hear. If they had been more secure personally, they would have been much better teachers for the experience. Their attitudes toward the meeting turned what should have been a meaningful exchange into a battle of wits--and that was a mistake. Their students may not have been academicians, but they were no dummies either. It was complained of one teacher that he showed too many films in his classes. He explained that often a film can depict something that no other classroom technique could demonstrate. That was conceded, but why, he was asked, so <u>many</u> films. Finally one boy was reckless enough to say what the others really had on their minds all along. The teacher--a married man--was asked if he thought the students in his classes didn't know what was going on when he'd say, "We've got a film today," flip on the projector switch, walk across the hall into the secretary's office, and close

the door behind him. "That's not what you're getting paid for, you know." Touché. Maybe he did think the kids didn't know what most of the staff knew. Despite the ground rules, everyone knew that the speaker of that comment would somehow, some time, pay for what he'd said. There's honest and then there's "honest."

Eventually the contest degenerated into hassling over particulars--specific grades, long-forgotten events. One incident from that evening, however, stands out in my mind. The discussion eventually became pretty hectic. Three or four boys would all try speaking at once, although one ground rule was "Wait to be called on." One of the Youth Leaders got up and strolled over to the pool table. He took a few shots, then wandered back and stood just behind the circle, leaning on the cue stick. One of the boys said something and several others heartily proclaimed their agreement, giving added examples without asking permission to speak. S., sitting beside me, offered his own opinion, also without permission. I turned in S.'s direction just in time to see the blunt end of the cue stick being rammed into the middle of his back. He winced in pain, but didn't even turn to see who had done it. It was the most vicious physical act I had ever seen an adult commit upon a child. To S., apparently, it wasn't even worth the effort to turn around. I turned around, though, and glowered at the Youth Leader for at least a minute. He smirked at me and went back to leaning on his cue stick.

I thought about that smirk for some time that evening; it could have only one interpretation. It was an old pro's way of saying to me, a newcomer, "Don't worry, we have ways of staying on top of things, whatever the situation." The boys' sudden freedom of expression

was seen as a kind of insurrection, but that Youth Leader's quick action and his flawless technique with a cue stick had saved the day.

His attitude is frighteningly typical. Most of the staff operate daily on the basis that "it's us against them." This was spelled out clearly one afternoon in a specially called staff meeting. A long, dreary winter had finally given way to a much needed spring. The drive home from the camp was beautiful. The kids in town were back outside again--running in the park, playing ball, riding bikes--welcoming in spring the way kids everywhere do. Or almost everywhere.

Back at MYC, the guys continued their double file trek to and from classes, to and from chow. No stopping for a minute to breathe the air and take in the budding beauty. "March!" is always the command. There was some snafu in the delivery of lightweight clothes, so the boys continued to sweat the spring away in their winter issues.

Springtime at Mohican Youth Camp is AWOL season. Feeling cheated of the reborn freedom most kids feel when winter passes, the tendency is to run--sometimes alone, sometimes in groups of two or three. They never get far, of course. AWOL retrieval is a practiced art at the camp. Out come the walkie-talkies and the state cars with their two-way radios. Once these city-raised boys hit the woods, they're lost. One ran head-on into the first tree he came to, knocking himself out cold. Those who manage to skirt such obstacles will sprint for a while, wander for a while, probably sit for a while and dig on their momentary freedom from surveillance. But eventually they hit the highway, and there wait their captors. AWOL's are almost always back within a few hours. They always get busted in rank. They always go straight to one of the isolation cells. Still, they always try it,

and in spring they try it in droves. One of the old-timers assured me without anxiety, "Happens every year 'bout this time." But the spring of 1973 was a lulu.

Eventually the camp Superintendent called a special staff meeting. He opened the session with a statement of the problem. Then the Deputy Superintendent rose and explained what action would be taken. The entire camp, beginning at 5:00 P. M., would be on restriction for thirty days. After that period had elapsed, each of the four dorms would be individually evaluated and removed from restriction if found to be deserving. A written notice of these actions, along with a Discipline Guide, would be distributed at a later date. (Those two documents can be found in Appendix A.) And then he said (and this is the man directly responsible for "treatment" at the camp), "It's a matter of who will win--the staff or the kids. And if I have to take kids to the county jail, I'll do it."

I don't quote the Deputy Superintendent's words in an attempt to indict him. He's a young, creative man, sympathetic with the boys and concerned with their treatment. I include the statement, rather, to point out two facts of life at the camp. First, it's almost impossible to work there without soon becoming infected with the pervasive notion that the battle is between the boys and the staff, rather than against the effects of the appalling social and economic conditions that have caused young children to become wards of the Ohio Youth Commission in the first place. Too many staff members gave me the same ominous response to many of my complaints. "You're still green. Wait till you've been here a while, and then see how you feel."

Second, the statement reveals the inane circularity of the whole system. Society feels that some of its members (here, children) are irresponsible citizens, incapable of controlling their own behavior. The Ohio Youth Commission is created and trusted to teach them responsibility and internal control. OYC creates the Mohican Youth Camp and staffs it with people whose job it is to teach boys responsibility and internal control. And all the staff can do is tell the boys, "If you don't show responsibility and internal control while you're here, we'll have to lock you up in the county jail." The boys are at MYC, of course, precisely because they don't possess those traits. The institution, by design, takes all manner of control away from the boys. It is decided for them what they will eat, what they will wear, where they will go, when they will wake up, often even who they will be permitted to talk to. Institutions, flatly, are not valid settings for the correction of delinquent behavior. The effect, in fact, seems to be the opposite. Under conditions of incarceration, even such non-delinquent groups as mental patients and prisoners-of-war will, almost invariably, exhibit behaviors typical to those of delinquents (cf. Cloward et al., 1960; Cressey, 1961). Cressey's work, furthermore, indicates that one of the strongest effects of deprivation of liberty is a heightened resistance to change. It seems the only option, then, <u>is</u> the prison cell. And that's where most will end up. It's probably all society wanted in the first place.

One other thing about AWOL's, before I move on. AWOL hunting is tremendous, outrageous fun. I would see men hopping into the cars or scampering into the woods with their walkie-talkies, and I knew the chase was on. It's like being in your own John Wayne movie. If Milton-Bradley could package it, they'd make millions. The day that

AWOL's cease, I know, is the day most of the staff will head on to greener pastures. Eric Berne, where are you?

When the Discipline Guide, which I have included, was distributed, an accompanying letter explained that one aspect of the discipline procedure had been omitted--the use of the isolation cells. Although a future guide to the use of isolation was to be forthcoming, no such document had been distributed by the time I left the employment of the Ohio Youth Commission. Nevertheless, constant use of the cells continued.

Each of the four dorms has an isolation cell. They're identical, each measuring about seven by ten feet and containing two mattresses and two blankets. The doors, which open only by key, of course, have large, unbreakable glass windows affording a full view of the cells. Isolation cells are just off the recreation area, next to the toilets and showers. Anyone entering one of the dorms must pass directly in front of the windowed door of the cell. Boys are always stripped down before being thrown in isolation. If they should resist or "act out," they may also be handcuffed.

As mentioned earlier, any attempt to go AWOL brings at least one day in isolation. Furthermore, any staff member, including teachers, can have a boy locked in isolation if he or she believes it is justified. Occasionally a boy will request to be placed in isolation, sometimes for his own protection from his peers (or the staff), sometimes just to get away from the hassle of thirty boys living in the same room, week after week, with little to do.

Being in isolation provides a certain psychic security for some of the boys. No responsibility must be taken, no decisions made,

no mistakes committed. Again, the institution functions in a manner that denies growth in the areas of decision-making and personal responsibility. The boys should have a quiet place for occasional solitude when they choose to use it, but to be stripped, locked in, and put on display is not the way to treat human beings of any age. If the reader doubts the intolerability of isolation, he need only try locking himself in a closet for a day or two. But again I come to the conclusion that, given the mass-custodial situation, where tempers easily flare, there may be no alternative.

Institutional life necessarily requires a high degree of conformity among the boys at MYC, primarily for economic reasons. Identical clothing styles is the most immediate indication of this. (The Ohio Youth Commission has recently begun, at least, to provide institutional garb in two or three different shades. It's just such token efforts that draw attention to the pervasion of the devastating conformity syndrome.) More damaging to the boys in the long run is that they are forced to behave identically. It isn't feasible to teach them to behave in a matter both acceptable and also appropriate to their own personalities. MYC procedures afford neither the time nor the resources for such individualized work. Everyone must bend into the permitted way of acting and feeling. Even tastes must coincide. Witness, for example, the Discipline Guide, which directs that even boys on restriction must attend "mandatory movies," in which "all camp members, except those confined in isolation, are to participate."

In a report to a governor's study in Connecticut, Dr. Earl S. Patterson, consulting psychiatrist to the Connecticut School for boys

at Meriden dealt with the effects of conformity within juvenile correctional institutions:

> At present boys admitted to the school are expected [by the staff] to reach a high level of conformity to [the institution's] pattern of procedures. Delay by the boy in doing so will bring punitive action against him in increasingly severe types, delay in classmanship advance, physical punishment, isolation. Continuing failure to conform will produce continuous isolation and finally release or . . . transfer to another institution.

Physical punishment is not sanctioned at the Mohican Youth Camp, but the Punishment Guide illustrates at length what measures are tolerated. (Cue stick methods are all ad lib.) Although Dr. Patterson's frame of reference is an institution in Meriden, Connecticut, it is perfectly applicable to MYC. His report continues:

"A boy who conforms . . . will soon be labeled as changed, adjusted, or improved . . . " even, he explains, when the conformity is spurious. The guys at MYC call it "Playing the man's game." Although the manner of conformity demanded is, perhaps, further from the black experience than from the white, Blacks at MYC are often better at "playing the game."

Boys who consistently refuse to conform, Dr. Patterson adds, are eventually released just to get them out of the institution. L., of whom I spoke earlier, was just such a case.

The question, then, is what do the wards of our institutions learn from this experience. Six points are suggested by Dr. Patterson's comments:

1. Lying, dissimulation, and pretense in order to placate persons in positions of strength. This implies no need or intent to change and denies personal responsibility for behavior.
2. The usefulness of power over weaker persons to control them or force them to certain ends.

3. The legitimacy of physical assault in order to effect goals.
4. Use of ridicule and humiliation to control a psychological opponent.
5. Rules are made to be bent--if not broken. The only ethic that truly applies is "don't get caught."
6. Hypocritical subterfuge to make an apparent attainment of a goal. What is real is what people can be fooled into accepting. "Saying will make it so."

This, of course, only strengthens the delinquent's view of his world: People, and especially adults, are deceptive, inconsistent, hypocritical, and untrustworthy.

My short contact with the MYC staff almost had me convinced that that's the way adults should be approached. One particular episode (that, by the way, which eventually precipitated my resignation) is a case in point. Nearly every boy I got to know at MYC would, sooner or later, get around to the question, "How come you can have a beard and long hair, but we gotta always get a haircut?"

Now, that's really two questions--"How come you can?" and "How come we gotta?" The first was easy. "I'm on the staff." "I'm not being held against my will." "No one's ever said anything to me." (Many soon would, however.) But that second question had me stumped. I soon began asking around for the answer. Some of the staff said they just looked better that way. I'll admit that a group of 120 boys, all sporting antiquated hairstyles looked a little bizarre, but they certainly didn't look "better." On those occasions when boys were

taken off camp for various activities, the townspeople gawked not only at the institutional garb, but also at the freakishness of their heads.

The most frequent explanation given me was that health considerations required butch haircuts. I bought that one until I learned that several OYC institutions don't control the manner in which the boys wear their hair--and without any danger of mange, lice, or whatever. If I'd been on my toes, I would have reasoned that the two OYC institutions for girls don't require butches for their wards.

The real explanation, it seems, is that the staff were so obsessed with mass conformity and so resistant to change that they never even questioned the procedure. Perhaps it's easier to deal with a herd of shorn sheep than to realize that the thing you're doing is being done to real human beings with differences and with feelings. For perhaps the same reason, nearly all staff members called the boys by their last names only. "What are you doin', Smith?" If you were to say, "What are you doin', Tim?" you'd be admitting that you were talking to a real person. If the staff could have remembered 120 different numbers, names would probably have been eliminated altogether.

For several weeks I sympathized with those boys who came to me to complain about the problem, but fearful of a one-man crusade, I took no real action. The local barber continued making his Monday evening visits to the camp, earning a dollar a head and going home with his pockets full.

When summer arrived the situation suddenly changed. The school's guidance counselor decided to take a three-month leave of absence to finish his degree. Rich LaBrie, a master's candidate from the School of Social Work at the University of Akron, was hired

as a temporary replacement. Rich, whose hair was longer than mine, started getting the same question, only now it was: "How come you two . . . ?" He and I decided that together we might be able to get some changes made. The haircut situation seemed like a pretty innocuous place to start.

The following Tuesday a handcuffed boy of sixteen, who was to become our cause célèbre, arrived on camp. T. had hair that reached halfway down his back. Rich, working as the guidance counselor, was one of the first staff members to meet new arrivals at MYC. On T.'s first day he was taken to see Rich about the school program. T.'s opening line to him was, "Some guys say I'm gonna have my hair cut off on Monday." On the outs T. played lead in a band, and his hair was as important to him as ten complete fingers are to a concert pianist.

Later that afternoon Rich brought T. down to the library to meet me. He was a lanky guy, growing faster than he could cope with. A severe case of adolescent acne did nothing to help his already homely features. But he had one beautiful head of hair, and he loved it. He said that if he had to get his hair cut Monday night, he would run. I told him to just stay cool and be sure he kept his hair washed and in good shape. He reddened and explained that he'd spent the last eight days in a county jail, where he hadn't even been supplied with soap.

Rich and I had dinner together in town that evening, planning our moves. He was worried about T.'s state of mind. The boy had spent most of the previous year in a mental hospital for severe depression. We agreed that it was time to do something. The following day we made

appointments to see anyone we could--the Deputy Superintendent, the school principal, and T.'s social worker. I went to see how T. was doing. He was looking pretty tense and still talking about running, but his hair was clean enough to do a Breck promo.

By late Friday afternoon we still didn't know where things stood. Everyone seemed to agree with us, but no one would move on it. All the classic lines were given. "It's really not my decision." "This kind of thing takes time." "There's no point in dragging Columbus into this. It's our problem and we have to deal with it right here."

Rich and I had decided earlier that chances for success would be improved if we kept discussion within the administration building. We feared that many of the workers on the "line" would be resistant to the change. Despite our efforts in this direction, however, talk about hair length was everywhere--in the teachers' lounge, in the treatment staff offices--even among the kids. Word had gotten out; the counteroffensive began. A staff dress code suddenly appeared on the scene. It had been drawn up over a year before, but the administration had decided not to institute it. It was a fairly archaic code by any standards, and most would have found it difficult to adhere to. Pants suits for women, as I recall, were forbidden. But the clincher, of course, was that males could not sport hair that reached to the collar. The response to the document's well-timed exhumation consisted of little more than a few chortles. No one, clearly, was going to be intimidated by it.

When I pulled into work on Monday morning, the first thing I saw was the barber chair, identical to those found in any barber shop.

Someone had dragged the instrument out to the front step of "D" dorm. I walked over and asked one of the Youth Leaders what it was doing outside. (I thought it just might be on its way to the city dump.) He explained that the chair was rotated each week and that "A" dorm had this Monday's privilege. I'd never seen the thing before, but now we were being given the full show.

During lunch hour, Rich and I managed to see the Deputy Superintendent again and asked what the story was. He said the Administration had just held a meeting to discuss the matter. All present, he confided, had agreed that the policy needed revision. In fact, they had felt that way for some time. Now, he smiled, we'll just have to get working on a new, more contemporary policy. There were lots of questions to be answered. Would the institution have to begin issuing shampoo to its wards? What about hair brushes? We should be on the road to enlightenment in a matter of weeks.

Rich and I realized that we'd, or rather, that the kids at camp had been shafted. We were now being flung the appropriate bull. "What about tonight?" Rich asked. "I told you about T.'s condition. What do you think this will do to him?" "If you're concerned about one particular case," the Deputy Superintendent countered, "you'd better talk to his social worker. That would be his jurisdiction."

Rich and I had found the man within two minutes. Of the four social workers on camp, I was glad T. had this one. He appeared to have a lot more savvy than the others. I also liked his demeanor. He always thought a moment before speaking, and he dragged easily on his pipe like a favorite uncle. He grinned warmly as he said, "Yes, I've heard what you two have been up to." He'd read T.'s record and

agreed that a haircut might do the boy considerable psychological damage. "So what are you going to do?" we pressured. He thought for a while, took a long drag on his pipe, then thought some more. "Well, the barber gets here about 6:00 P. M. and is usually finished around 7:30 P. M. I'll have T. come into my office right after dinner and keep him here until the coast is clear."

Finally. Finally someone was willing to act decisively for the well-being of a boy--not because it was easy, not because a policy demanded--just because he had the rare ability to see the boys as human beings. T., at least, had a reprieve, and we would have another week before the barber's next visit. There was a chance that the man would never see the camp again after tonight.

Although Rich and I both implicitly trusted the social worker to stick by his promise, we asked if he'd mind our presence in his office during the coming vigil. He consented, glad, I think, for some moral support. Rich and I headed back to the jobs we were actually being paid to perform. On the way we considered a last few alternative actions. If we could learn the barber's name, one of us might try to reach him by phone that afternoon. It wouldn't be too difficult to devise some excuse to keep him away that evening. I'd never run across a rule forbidding the impersonation of an MYC administrator on the phone. Another possibility was bringing T. down to Rich's office or mine in the library and locking ourselves in until the barber had left.

All things considered, though, the social worker's plan seemed like the wisest decision. He would be acting within his authority,

Rich and I wouldn't be opening ourselves up to disciplinary action, and, most important, T. stood the best chance of keeping his hair.

Things passed smoothly until mid-afternoon, when all the guys in the library rushed to the window. I looked out in time to see a group of men hurrying off, walkie-talkies in hand. Someone had just run, and I had a good idea who it might be; he'd still been talking about splitting, and the barber would be there in a few hours. About twenty minutes later I got a call from Rich confirming that T. had gone AWOL. It appeared that he'd solved the problem himself. He'd played it pretty well, staying put for a week, not panicking. Now, with any luck, he could stay lost until the barber had split. Even if he were apprehended before, he'd be sent straight to isolation which, although not a very pleasant place to spend the night, would keep him out of that chair.

Rich and I decided to stay after work anyway, just to see how the thing would turn out. At 5:30 P. M. we walked to the cafeteria for dinner. Meals there are very cheap, and the staff can take advantage of the prices three times a day if they care to. A few do come to work early enough for breakfast, but most just eat the noontime meal there. Although eating at tables with the boys is encouraged in an effort to promote goodwill, staff members almost always sit by themselves, away from the guys.

Rich and I were the first two people in the dining hall. Just as we were putting our trays on the table, the boys from "C" dorm (the one to which T. had been assigned) were marched in. Several of the first few boys through the line sat down with us, a little surprised to see educational staff members at the evening meal. There was one place left, beside me, when I looked

up and saw T. "You're back," I said. "Here, sit with us." As he sat his tray down next to mine, I noticed that he'd been handcuffed. Our table was short a chair, so I reached behind me for another. I was sliding one up to our table, when it was wrenched from my hand by one of the "C" dorm Youth Leaders.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" he screamed at me. I sat stunned for a moment. I'd often heard him use that tone of voice before, but in the past it had been reserved exclusively for the boys. For an instant I was swept by a wave of shame, as if I'd committed some horrendous misdeed. It was the only moment of my entire employment there that I knew exactly what it was like to be committed to the Mohican Youth Camp--fearful, impotent, friendless. The sensation was terrifying.

With difficulty, my mind groped its way back to reality. I stared at the man, still not quite able to believe the vulgarity of his actions. He was a huge fat man whose obesity made his movements generally buffoonish. Now he stood motionless before me, red with rage. I was certain he was about to wallop me, although I couldn't imagine why.

Finally I mustered all my cool and answered, "There's only five chairs at this table." He screamed back, his frenzy even greater, "Who gave him permission to sit there?" and pointed at T., who stood in bewilderment, his chained arms hanging limply, his face twitching to the throb of his pulse.

I turned and looked at Rich and the three boys sitting with us, searching for a clue as to why the world had suddenly slipped out of phase and this crazed man was shouting nonsense at me. In my

entire life, no one had ever needed permission to sit down to dinner with me. Wondering where the whole thing would end, I said to the man, whose attention had now turned to T., "Hey, I asked him to sit down with us."

Rich, who looked like he was about to lose his appetite, finally spoke the words that christened our evening of defiance. "Hey, Charlie, why don't you just go cool out somewhere and let the rest of us enjoy our dinners." There was a murmur of approval from the roomful of boys. The Youth Leader grabbed up T.'s tray, shoved it onto the table behind me, and waddled off to sit with his cronies.

I turned around to tell T. I was sorry about the scene. All he could say in response was, "This place is crazy." No man of letters could have put it more accurately. He talked for a while about his AWOL attempt, confessing that he'd botched it pretty badly. When they got him back to the camp, mandatory isolation had been waived in deference to the barber's visit. There was still no way they were going to cut his hair off, he said. I assured him that things would be O. K. if he'd just hang loose for a while and go back to the dorm without causing any commotion.

Rich and I finished dinner and decided to head straight back to the social worker's office while the rest of the dorm was still at chow. We pulled in a couple of extra chairs and the three of us sat down. As we waited for the boys' return, Rich and I told of our interesting meal. When the guys got back, the social worker went out to get T. When the two walked in, I noticed that the older man had managed to have T.'s manacles removed.

We told T. to settle in for a couple of hours. He saw what we were up to, grinned, and took the remaining seat. Although he had

been painfully shy and remote since his arrival a week before, he now began to talk with ease. He told about his family, his music, his friends, his girl, his run-in with the law. An hour passed quickly and all of us relaxed.

The social worker finally got around to asking T. what his plans for the future were. Now, that may be a valid question to boys his age in most circumstances, but it doesn't make much sense to a boy being held in a juvenile detention institution. Normal life developments stop and immediate survival issues take full command of the senses. It's like asking a soldier, crouching for safety in a foxhole amidst massive shelling, "Now just settle back and tell me what's on your mind in regard to your future professional goals back home."

A boy at MYC spends most of his time wondering where the next blow is likely to come from, how he can get out of the place in the shortest amount of time, how he can cope with his frustrations, or maybe just who he can really trust to help him with these problems. I was hoping that our presence there that evening would help T. answer the question "Who . . . "

Just as he was saying that he didn't really know what he wanted to do when he would be old enough to work, someone knocked on the office door. We all tensed at the sound, but the social worker said, "It's probably just one of the boys wanting to talk with me." He walked over and opened the door. One of the Youth Leaders stuck his head around the door, pointed at T., and said, "Time for your haircut, young man." T. froze. Rich and I looked at the social worker. He looked at the floor and chewed on his lower lip, as if thinking. Then he looked up at us again, and I could see from his expression

that he wasn't going to do one damned thing to stop the atrocity. I was enraged at being duped. I said to Rich, "I think I'm the only person on camp right now with a key to the library," but the social worker said that would only delay the inevitable and would probably get T. into hot water. I wish today that we'd tried it anyway--but we didn't. Instead, when the Youth Leader took T. by the arm, he stood up and walked lifelessly back to "A" dorm. He had surrendered his spirit to the institution and was about to be initiated into the corps of look-alike zombies.

Rich and I accompanied them back to the barber, along with several other "C" dorm guys who were slated for haircuts that Monday. The barber was just finishing on one boy as we arrived. When he got up from the chair, another passively took his place. Before he started in on each boy, the barber would hold up a sheet to be signed. T. finally asked one of the more seasoned victims what the sheet was for.

"That's how he gets paid. A dollar a signature." Incredible. It was like asking a man about to be hanged to sign his own decree of death. Finally all the boys had been shorn but T. The barber, who by now had a pretty good idea of what had been going on and why Rich and I were there, looked over at me and said insidiously, "You're next, boy." I considered sitting down in his chair and refusing to move, but sensed that such an act of passive resistance would not meet with passive response. I didn't feel like giving the Youth Leaders who were standing around, delighted by our ineffectiveness, a chance to work me over a bit. Any resistance, clearly, would have been worse than useless.

T. said, "Well, here we go," and walked to the chair. When the barber held his sheet up for T.'s signature, the boy said, "You can cut my hair off, but I'll be f***ed if you're going to get paid for it," and refused to sign. That was the last act of defiance I ever saw T. perform during the remainder of my employment at the camp.

The barber just smiled and said, "That's up to you, buddy." The next two minutes were the most revolting I've ever lived through. The emotions that I experienced watching T.'s head being shaved are far beyond my ability to recreate on paper. I began to shake, inside and out, and couldn't stop for over an hour.

The barber, showing the lack of understanding that seems to characterize the region, took T.'s refusal to sign as a personal attack and reacted accordingly. Instead of giving T. the usual butch haircut, he shaved the boy's entire head as closely as his clippers would allow.

When the ordeal was finished, Rich announced to everyone, "That's the sickest thing I've ever seen," and ran out. I walked back a minute later with T. and the rest of the boys. When we returned to their dorm, Rich was letting the social worker have it. "Have you ever witnessed one of these haircut sessions?" he demanded. The man nodded numbly. "And you haven't tried to stop it? Well it's gonna stop now. And if it happens again next week, I'm gonna get the guys I ride with in Akron and we're gonna drive our bikes through this place and we're gonna trash it!"

After Rich had stormed off, back in the direction of the school, I tried to express the profundity of my contempt for the situation, but couldn't. Only words of violence could speak what I felt, and I'd never

learned to use that mode of expression—in fact, had never before felt compelled to. The social worker looked at me, his face stinking of self-disgust. He could only shake his head and repeat, three or four times, the words "I'm sorry."

I was about to lose my manly composure and went hurrying off to the library and solitude. On the way I passed Rich talking, in the main yard, to one of the head administrators. Four or five "Citizens" were standing nearby, talking among themselves. I made it back to the library just in time. I sat alone in the unlit building, crying out the tension I hadn't been able to unleash with words.

Rich walked in about twenty minutes later and announced that his employment at the camp was about to end. On his way back from the dorms, he'd passed several boys talking with one of the camp bigwigs (one who played at being a "buddy" to the boys.) One of the guys had yelled, "Hey Rich, what would you do if you were committed here, and they tried to cut your hair?" Rich shot back, "What would I do? I'd tear this camp to the ground."

Those words, spoken publicly, had clearly sealed his fate. We drove into town for a debriefing session over drinks. His being fired, we agreed, was inevitable, but reaction to my participation in the evening's events was impossible to surmise. I'd just have to wait till morning to find out. In any case, I didn't anticipate working at Mohican Youth Camp too much longer. I was beginning to see, more and more, that no matter how I tried to function at the camp, I was inevitably working as just another cog in a huge machine that served little purpose other than suppression.

Rich showed up for work on time the next day and was given an hour to collect his things before being told to get out and never set

foot on OYC property again. I walked him to the parking lot and helped him strap the few things he had accumulated onto the back of his motorcycle. I told him I'd see him for dinner to talk over what, if anything, was said to me.

Later that morning the call came. The school secretary told me that the principal would like to see me in his office. On the way to my appointment, I went over one last time the outline of the defense I'd been considering all morning. I never got the chance to use it. Far from being reprimanded, I'd been summoned, the principal said, so that he might congratulate me for my actions the previous evening. Unlike Rich, he confided, I'd been mature enough to keep my head and illustrate to the boys how a rational adult behaves in an explosive situation.

He did feel obliged, on the other hand, to point out that our efforts had only been counter-productive. Our earlier attempts to go through channels had started the ball rolling, he admitted, and the change "we all wanted to see" would have come eventually. To alter the policy after Rich's improper behavior the previous night, however, would imply that such actions were valid methods for inducing change and would inevitably encourage the boys to "act out."

I walked back to the library feeling more depressed than ever. So they'd finally found an excuse for maintaining the status quo--and it was all our fault, they said. Of course nothing would have ever been done about the haircut policy if we hadn't raised the question in the first place. And administrative inaction in T.'s case had pushed us into Monday night's showdown. The message? Don't rock the boat. Or more accurately, don't bother trying to rock the boat, 'cause this one, fella, doesn't budge.

The principal's introductory compliments, wittingly or not, were meant to have the same effect. "We like you, Randy. You're really just like we are, so why not join the team?" The notion of teamwork would be worth encouraging if everyone's efforts were directed toward more appropriate goals, and if those goals were more clearly defined than the current vague attempts to realize rehabilitation.

By week's end my two-week notice was in the principal's hands. It was short and to the point, offering no actual explanation for my resignation. Instead I wrote, "My reasons [for this decision], if you're interested, are myriad." I guess no one was--at least I was never asked.

Although only a handful of boys had actually been witness to the Monday night show, word quickly got around. In the next couple of days, nearly every guy on camp came to the library to talk to me about it. When they would ask what had happened to Rich, I answered them honestly with, "He was fired." To most he had become something of a folk hero. Everyone wanted his address, and several came to me with letters to deliver to Rich.

I began talking more openly about staff members I disliked and camp policy I didn't agree with. New boys on camp were quickly brought to the library by their dorm-mates to meet me. Library attendance soared. Library usage even increased. A boy walked in one afternoon and handed me a portrait he had drawn of me. The boy was having massive problems in school. He had scored in the mid-sixties on his I. Q. tests and, not surprisingly, was unable to read. But his drawing was quite good, and he was obviously proud of his accomplishment. His subject was clearly identifiable, although his never-ending

sense of humor had been unable to resist blacking out a front tooth. We taped it on the wall for everyone to see. In a matter of days the wall was covered with my likeness. Some had been drawn seriously, some as caricature; some revealed extraordinary talent. Everyone wanted to try his hand. I basked in the glory of my popularity.

At the time I attributed their good favor to the fact that for the first time a staff member had acted clearly in their defense and against the will of the staff. I assumed that they suddenly realized that someone might really care. After a year's consideration, however, I believe I read the situation incorrectly. I think the boys' ebullience had little to do with me and my motives. Instead, their enjoyment stemmed simply from seeing tension, controversy, and contempt within a staff that, in the past, had represented a solid block. They felt that they were somehow responsible for the strife, and they therefore experienced some feeling of control. In their eyes I had been manipulated into caring for them, and they liked the idea of having me work for <u>them</u> rather than for the administration. Whatever the cause, I was well liked by the boys, and whatever their motivations, I was glad to work for them.

Once I began passing letters along to Rich, I became something of a courier. Several boys, during my last two weeks, would bring me letters they'd written to their girlsfriends back home, asking if I'd post them in town. When I asked why they didn't just use the regular mail procedure at camp, they said their letters were all read before being sent out.

Now I knew that wasn't true because I'd checked on it long before, just out of curiosity. Several staff members had told me that

mail, both incoming and outgoing, was delivered unread. Only incoming mail was opened, and then only to check for contraband. Still, I could understand the boys' paranoia, since all their actions were so closely monitored. As the boys' request didn't appear to violate any "security precautions," I saw no real harm in catering to their whims.

At the time I was living in an old farmhouse with two Youth Leaders from the camp. When our hours happened to coincide, we would share rides to and from work. One evening when I was riding home with one of them, I asked if he'd stop at the post office in town so I could drop off a couple of letters the guys had given me to mail. He was stunned that I would participate in such a breach of security. When I explained that I'd been told that boys' mail was never read, he said that was the policy statement. It was given because of some law or other. The actual policy, in fact, was to read all letters written by the boys in case AWOL schemes were being designed with friends on the outs. For that reason outgoing mail must be given to either the social worker of the dorm or one of the Youth Leaders with envelopes unsealed.

I had to wait until I was driving to work alone the next morning to mail the letters. This additional example of staff duplicity was all I needed to assure that I was doing the right thing. Besides, I knew how I would have felt if someone else had read all the love letters I'd written at seventeen. And as for the possibility that I was smuggling out directives to "meet me between the eighty-third and eighty-fourth tree east of the sixth primitive campsight arrow with motor running"--well, even James Bond couldn't have pulled that one off.

A couple of days after the haircut incident, I got wind of a positive outgrowth of the boys' new feeling of control over their situation. Several boys in "C" dorm had gotten together and written a petition explaining the situation and calling for an end to all mandatory haircuts. The petition was being circulated throughout the dorm, when one of the Youth Leaders got hold of it. True to form, he confiscated the document, threatening to send it on to the administration building. When the administration heard of the Youth Leader's action, fully aware of the implications of such suppression, they announced that the petition would be returned to the boys. In fact a couple of guys were even granted permission to visit the other three dorms to solicit signatures.

The petition was eventually delivered to the camp superintendent--to no effect, of course. I doubt that anyone really imagined it would do any good. But at least the process had illustrated that the boys still retained a few of their human rights. To the boys it served as a permissible way to vent some of their frustration. A few had refused to sign, sensing, I suppose, that the petition might be used against them as a kind of "enemies list." I couldn't swear that it never was.

When I left MYC the policy was operating unchanged. Boys were still being forced into the barber's chair every Monday. When I returned a few weeks later to collect some things I'd left behind, however, some changes had come about. Once a boy reached the status of Citizen, visits to the barber were optional. Although the change was minimal and did nothing to rectify the inhuman attitude that even a boy's body is not his own property, it did give boys soon to be

released a chance to grow their hair long enough to avoid total stigmatization in the eyes of their peers on the outs. In addition, Citizens were permitted to wear their own clothing on camp. The whole drama closely resembled the classic situation in which a change is instituted only after the departure of the change agents who had been working on the problem. As of my last contact with the camp earlier this year, the policy regarding personal appearance still stood as a form of Citizen privilege.

The worst aspect of the mass conformity imposed on the boys at MYC is that it denies them the right to differential treatment. If we agree with the notion that juvenile offenders break the law for a variety of reasons, then we must also agree that the methods used to change any particular offender into a non-offender must vary in accordance with the cause.

While I was at MYC, plans were being made to change methodology in an effort to provide just such differential treatment. This was to be accomplished through the use of "I-levels." This correctional approach is yet another concept that has been developed within the California Youth Authority. It was designed in the mid-60's by Dr. Marguerite Q. Warren, a social researcher for the CYA, as a special tool for the Community Treatment Program, of which she was director (cf. Warren, 1967). Although I-level connected treatment is specifically geared to the community setting (The literature, in fact, usually refers to the I-level approach as "an alternative to institutionalization."), MYC is not the first institution to adopt the methodology of this approach to corrections.

The "I" of I-level stands for interpersonal maturity or perceptual level. I-level assignment is designated by a number ranging from one to seven. It is a developmental theory, in that each of us begins life at the level of I-1. As the child develops, he or she moves up the I-level scale toward I-7 (a point of near developmental perfection which few of us ever attain). Most stop somewhere along the way.

Within each category are a number of behavioral sub-classifications, consistent with the level of interpersonal perception. Dr. Warren noted that most juvenile offenders fall into certain sub-classes of I-levels 2, 3, and 4, and for each of these behavioral sub-types she prescribed specific types of treatment. In her Community Treatment Program, youths diagnosed in each particular classification were assigned to a parole officer who had been identified as highly skilled in working with that type of delinquent. In community-centered group homes, youths were similarly assigned to appropriate house parents. In this manner, too, for example, children diagnosed as belonging to groups characterized by high manipulatability could be separated from those belonging to groups in which a high degree of manipulativeness is evident--an arrangement near impossible in mass-custody institutions.

Dr. Warren, herself, admits that the problems with which her program best works "are those which any young person faces in his daily life rather than the more artificial ones of a total institution." Furthermore, I-level assigned delinquents are meant to be provided with intensive interaction with a few highly skilled professionals. Institutions traditionally employ large numbers of unskilled non-professionals, principally for security purposes. An attempt was made during my employment at the camp to train staff members en masse

in the use of I-levels, but the system is so intricate that only a superficial understanding was possible under the conditions of training. These periods of "staff development" usually began with the trainer saying something like, "Now your I-4-Nx is easily identifiable by his inability to . . . ," and ended with a Youth Leader saying, "Well I think I've got this I-4-Nx in my dorm, and let me tell you what I caught him doing yesterday."

I never heard if I-level methods were eventually instituted at the camp. If they were, I doubt that they proved very productive. The huge staff is simply too unwieldly to direct toward common goals. Evidence of an attitude of professionalism toward their work is seldom exhibited. Most just function by reacting emotionally to situations, never taking time to let their skills (where they exist) override their own hang-ups.

Professional bungling is worst when it takes the form of direct attack against a boy and his values, because in so doing, the staff member forfeits his ability to assume the role of trusted and, therefore, influential change agent. Examples of such ineptitude could be drawn from any day of my employment, but one incident, involving a boy named F., was the most unsavory to my taste.

F. was both cheerful and intelligent, which made him fairly atypical of the boys at MYC. One of his legs was considerably shorter than the other, but the specially constructed shoes he wore made it quite unnoticeable. In fact I had known F. several weeks before a malicious comment by another boy brought it to my attention. F. had an especially hard time in gym, because regular tennis shoes pronounced his infirmity, causing him to move quite clumsily and often to stumble.

He went to great lengths each day to be exempted from phys. ed. period and was always reprimanded for his attempts to "weasel out." He talked to me often of the embarrassment he felt at his constantly awkward behavior on the gym floor, but I was never successful in arranging alternative exercise for him, despite my talks with the nurse and the gym teacher. They agreed that F., who was always willing to do extra work around the camp, might get proper exercise through other endeavors, but they said what he really needed was the opportunity to improve his relationships with his peers. Gym, they felt, was the best place for such practice. I guess I had to agree with them; F. had a marked inability to interact with the other boys. He had only one friend on camp, so he relied heavily on the staff for human interaction--too heavily, I suppose. His obsequiousness toward staff members was too often a nuisance. Because of his fawning, which in camp jargon is "hangin' on staff," his progress through the system was slow, even though his behavior was, in other respects, near meticulous.

Eventually his friend was released from the institution. F. was forced to begin making new friends, although he had difficulty breaking the ice. When he finally reached Citizen status, he was allowed certain personal possessions, so he brought back a record from his Citizen home pass--a recording of the Woodstock music festival. The album was very popular among the boys and helped serve as the ice-breaker F. needed. It also happened to be one of my favorites, so F. said he'd bring it down and play it on the library record player some afternoon. He showed up later that week during free period, Woodstock in hand.

The double-album set is a collection of the best songs of the best performers who took part in the three-day music celebration. Most critics consider the highlight of the entire affair to have been the appearance of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, four brilliant artists of the 60's. Besides being top-notch singers and musicians, all four are composers and have written some of the best songs to come out of the rock idiom. Unlike the heavy metal sound so typical of rock-and-roll, their songs are delicate in melody, intricate in harmony, and ageless in lyrical content. Most of their compositions have transcended the rock scene and can be heard everywhere from chic supper clubs to insipid Musak stations (Renditions slightly altered, of course.)

All four musicians had been in the business, and successfully, for years, but it was at Woodstock that they appeared for the first time as a group. Their subsequent rise to the very top of American music has made the Woodstock recording of "Wooden Ships" a historical landmark in the industry.

When the arm of the record player got to that song on F.'s record, only loud crackling sounds were produced. I walked over to check the needle, only to find that the entire band on the disc had been scratched away. When I asked F. what had happened, he said the camp Chaplain had taken a nail to it several days before. I'd run into the Chaplain a couple of times, and I was sure that a lot of rock-and-roll music wouldn't meet with his approval, but C. S. N. & Y. is probably the most innocuous group on the scene. I couldn't guess what in the song had offended the Chaplain. F. explained that during the song's introduction, one of the group's members utters a "forbidden"

word. The Chaplain, visiting the dorms one evening, had heard it, picked up a nail, and obliterated the entire song.

Frankly, I didn't believe F. I couldn't imagine that such destruction would be permitted; I certainly couldn't see a "man of the cloth" doing it. I thought it more likely that one of the boys had done it, probably paying F. back for something he'd done and was now loathe to admit. Unbelievably, F.'s story was corroborated the next day by a staff member who had witnessed the incident. More unbelievably, nothing had been done about it. We walked over to the administration building, showed them the record, and told them what had happened. The Deputy Superintendent went to see the Chaplain straightaway and was given assurance that he would never again destroy boys' property. That's a promise of no little consequence, but it didn't answer the question of proper restitution to F. That question was never even broached, and F.'s record was never replaced. Once again a boy got the short end of the stick--a fact of life so pervasive in the backgrounds of juvenile offenders, and probably a principal cause of their delinquency in the first place.

That week-end while I was visiting a friend, I played her copy of the Woodstock album just to hear what had pushed the Chaplain over the edge. C. S. N. & Y. are introduced and long thunderous applause greets them. One of the four thanks the crowd for their reception and says they're grateful for the support because "this is the first time we've ever played together and we're scared shitless." And then they sing.

I trust the reader can imagine without my help the vocabulary in general usage throughout the camp--a nearly all-male environment.

Both boys and staff modify their language somewhat when around the few women employed at MYC. Swearing in the kitchen, for example, is discouraged. But on the whole, language that would probably have reddened the cheeks of my grandmother plays an integral role in the conversation of most boys and staff members at the camp. I don't mean to imply that their vocabularies betray a morbid obsession with the use of expletives. To put bounds on the thing, I would say their language is somewhat earthier than that heard on the CBS evening news, but far less scatological than that heard in the Oval Office during Richard Nixon's administration. That is, their language is typical of a decent but human American adult.

When I asked the boys why they thought the Chaplain had grown violent at that oddly designed word "shitless," most said, "Oh, you know, he's got a problem." What I really couldn't understand was why in the world he had been hired for a job for which he was so obviously ill-suited; why he had chosen to work in a place he found so distasteful; and why taxpayers' money was being used to pay him for his insults. The real crime is that the Chaplain at MYC ought to be playing a vital role in the total rehabilitative process. Instead, he was only an odd little man who freaked at the sound of a word on a record.

I've written nearly fifty pages now of people who seemed to be working against the correctional process. There were several camp employees who struck me as very competent, very sensitive people: the woman who taught English, the man who taught art, several Youth Leaders, a couple of administrators. They appeared to have basic insight into the nature of rehabilitation and real compassion for children who had been born unlucky. Those staff members fought the battle in their own

ways, day after day, and had somehow learned to cope with the immense frustration of their jobs. But if their frustrations must be weighed on hydraulic scales, their successes require a micrometer for measurement. Thousands of lives, a handful of success stories.

It's a failure factory, a school for criminals. It's a place where adults have the opportunity to play out their fantasies, release anxiety by doling out affection or assigning isolation as the mood strikes. It's a house of humiliation where a boy must ask for toilet paper before going to the "john" and then must wait while his ten sheets are counted and torn off by a Youth Leader. It's a mutant world where a boy's developing sexuality is twisted 180 degrees. It's the point where childhood ends.

And then right smack in the middle of the place stands the library.

CHAPTER II

THE LIBRARY

> I couldn't understand anything the judge said. The only thing I understood was "you're committed." Everything else was a bunch of mumble-jumble. He went on and on a mile a minute and you sit there twiddling your thumbs and waiting for what he says . . . you're just listening for the main word, you're either committed or you're going home.
>
> Quoted by Martha Baum and Stanton Wheeler "Becoming an Inmate," in Wheeler, ed., Controlling Delinquents

As I was driving to the Mohican Youth Camp my first day on the job, I was still pondering the question that I'd been working on all week-end: "What role should the MYC library play?" In more behavioral terms: "What experiences should it provide for the young men it's designed to serve?" This chapter will attempt to throw some light on that question. I warn the reader at the outset, however, that no tidy step-by-step solutions will be forthcoming. I've talked with several longtime institutional librarians whose conclusions are antipodal to mine, as the reader will soon learn.

As I took out my shiny new key and unlocked the library door that first Monday morning, I had some vague ideas of what I was getting into. I'd been fortunate in having four disparate previews of MYC and its library; going blindly into a new job can be overwhelming, so I was grateful for the advantage. If this thesis ever finds its way

to the hands of someone about to begin a similar job and helps raise that person's confidence in any way, I shall consider my efforts here worthwhile.

My first contact with the Mohican Youth Camp was nearly six months prior to my accepting a position there. Ms. Theresa Jones, who was then working as the MYC librarian, had invited the members of our department at the University of Toledo to come for an afternoon visit. So after morning classes, we all piled into a few cars and drove down. Autumn had rendered the Mohican State Park magnificent. Ms. Jones and a few of the boys met us in the parking lot with warm welcome. Good vibes were everywhere. It was well after one o'clock, but the kitchen, having heard of our planned visit, had kept a warm meal in the oven.

After lunch Ms. Jones took us to the library. It was one of the friendliest buildings I've ever been in--all natural wood paneling, high beamed ceiling. Glass ran the length of one entire wall, overlooking a breath-taking scape of nature at its most primitive. Construction had been completed without a trace of imposing weightiness. Ms. Jones talked broadly about library services in juvenile correctional institutions. (Six months later I would count Theresa Jones among my friends and would get a much more personal view of the situation.)

After answering our questions about the library, Ms. Jones escorted our large group back to one of the dormitories for a look at a recreation area. I was quickly pulled into a pool game with a few of the boys--budding sharks, all. Having proved their expertise and feeling confident in their victory, they soon had me, along with a fellow University of Toledo student, engaged in a heavy conversation. Coming up for air some time later, I noticed that the others had left

us behind. I probably could have caught up with them if I'd tried, but I wasn't too interested in seeing the other facilities on camp. A laundry is a laundry and a classroom is a classroom, but children in custody was a whole new world for me.

Our discussion began with a dip into the current music scene, but soon moved on to more meaty matters. I got my first look at some of those sacred "contracts." I was struck by the boys' flat honesty and their use of sarcasm to counteract their frustrations. I spotted two characteristics which seemed atypical of their age group. The first was their worldly wisdom, which I'd expected, but not to such a degree. The second was their emotional restraint. There was little of the lively interaction I was accustomed to seeing within a group of adolescents. More than once that afternoon I centered on the image of a roomful of sleepwalkers who'd given up on awakening.

Conversation eventually got around to the library. The typical response to the question: "What do you think of the library here?" was: "The library? Oh, you mean Mizz Jones. She's far out . . . "--usually followed by a list of her qualities. It was more than mere personification. To them, the library was the person, not the place. The boys found her a wonderful topic of conversation. I don't recall a single negative remark. Most of the boys were even beginning to share her interest in bird-watching--a pasttime they probably would have considered a little peculiar in anyone else. The boys had even hung birdhouses outside the picture-windowed wall of the library and kept them stocked with seed. When the camp supply of binoculars weren't being used in one of the Keystone Cop AWOL hunts, they could always be found lining the window's ledge.

The mutual concern and respect between Theresa Jones and the boys was obvious, and it appeared that the library was the "in spot" on camp grounds.

My second contact with the camp was some time later. Ms. Jones had resigned from her position the first of the year, and for months the library stood locked and unused. Word reached Toledo some time in March that MYC was looking to fill the position. An interest was expressed in hiring one of the interns from the Community Information Specialist program at the University of Toledo, and two of us from the program drove down for interviews. The Department of Library and Information Services felt that MYC would be an ideal place for one of its students to spend the internship quarter. My classmate decided that the camp was too far from his wife and home in Michigan and withdrew himself from the institution's consideration. In the end I was offered the job.

The administrator who conducted the interview saw the library's role as primarily that of a junior high school media center. He stressed the need for close co-operation with the classroom teachers in all areas, including curriculum design. Although school libraries were not my primary interest, I had had several courses in the College of Education and had shared numerous classes with Master's candidates from the Media Program at the University of Toledo. Furthermore, in my work as a young adult librarian, I had worked extensively with junior high students on school assignments. Much of my time had been spent in local classrooms and media centers. I was also told that the State Library would offer any assistance I might need through Phil Koons, the Library Development Consultant for Institutional Service. (Phil proved to be an invaluable resource during my employment--and not only for

his professional expertise. He had the remarkable ability to minimize the frustrations I experienced and to help redirect them toward more constructive enterprise.)

Although I recognized the value of the library as an integral part of the school program, I felt there were additional areas of service required to fully meet the needs of its users. After all, MYC was no ordinary community. Its library would also be responsible for providing material needed to solve non-academic problems--problems intrinsic to adolescence which are not usually dealt with in the classroom. In that sense, it would be assuming the role more traditionally assigned to the public library. In such an isolated environment, the library would also have to serve as a source of leisure reading material, substituting for the family bookshelf and the local magazine racks, newsstands, and book stores.

In addition, I had the feeling that in such a closed, restrictive community, the library had an obligation to serve as a center for clear, open information regarding camp affairs and administrative actions. In my first visit with the boys, I had already witnessed the anxiety brought on by rumor and lack of information.

The administrator seemed open to all possibilities. He said the librarian would have near autonomy in library operations. As the school at MYC had been accredited by the Ohio State Board of Education, the library would be required to comply with minimum school library standards as laid down by that state body. Those guidelines refer primarily to equipment, volumes per student, etc. Actual operating procedures are broadly described and allow the librarian almost total freedom.

The most substantive bit of information I received that day came at the end of the interview. The administrator, with obvious discomfort, prefaced his question with, "You aren't obligated to answer this," then added, "but we'll find out anyway." My curiosity was piqued and I said, "Shoot." "With which political party did you register in the last primary?" When I told him, he simply said, "Well, that'll make things easier." I hadn't thought, years before, that the outcome of a near random decision might affect my future employment. I lost some naïveté that morning.

I was irritated, though not at the man interviewing me. The question clearly wasn't his. He must have had to ask it innumerable times, yet he still felt awkward doing so. What was provoking to me was the cognizance that politics really does stick its nose where it doesn't belong. The legality of such behavior aside, I come back to what should be the primary question--what about the rehabilitation of kids in trouble, and, by extension, the welfare of the communities to which they'll return? The kids--how much shorter can their end of the stick become?

When notice came that I'd been selected to fill the position, I decided it was time to get in touch with Theresa Jones. Luckily, she had just moved to Toledo, where she would soon begin work on her second graduate degree. Her first had been in English, but since her interests had shifted to librarianship, she decided to earn a professional degree in that area. I gave her a call and asked if she had time to give me a briefing. We met for lunch the following day.

Our meeting, I think, proved to be as much a debriefing for Theresa as it was a briefing for me. Her employment with the OYC had

been a long and, for the most part, a satisfying experience. During the three months since her resignation she had spent much of her time looking back on her years at MYC--where she had been successful and why, where she had faltered and how she could have improved things. She had attempted to formulate an overview of the kinds of boys that are committed to MYC, the kinds of needs they share, and the kinds of skills that are useful in serving them. Theresa had even begun to get some of her thoughts down on paper. Much of those writings appear in her thesis, which I have cited in my introduction.

We finished lunch, talked away the afternoon, continued on through dinner--and when we finally broke it off late that evening, I understood why even the hardened, blasé ghetto kids I'd talked with at the camp spoke of her with unabashed admiration. It was an important day in my life--personally, because I'd met a "kindred spirit" and professionally, because my anxiety over starting a new job had been transformed into enthusiastic anticipation. Except for one thing. I felt dwarfed next to Theresa's qualities and experience. I was frank with her as we parted: "I'm afraid I can never make the library what you made it." She, too, was frank: "Of course you can't, because you aren't me." And then added: "You're going to have to make your own kind of library, and I have the feeling it'll be a good one." The last thing she said to me that night was that she was glad I'd be taking the job--not just because she trusted me with something very special to her, but also because I could keep her posted on what was happening at Mohican. After more than three months, she was still going through a kind of emotional withdrawal from the camp.

To the boys, the MYC library had been the person--Theresa Jones. For Theresa it had been a forum--a center for the exchange and development of ideas. Theresa would be the first to admit that she learned as much from the boys as they did from either her or the books on the shelves. When she learned how important a medium contemporary music was to the boys, it became important to her--not patronizingly, but in the deepest sense. Her own collection of classical records has had to make room for white rock and black soul. Similarly, Henry James now shares space on her bookcase with Eldridge Cleaver, Maya Angelou--even Iceberg Slim.

It's not unusual, of course, for individual tastes to broaden. The passage of time, along with a personal sense of security, often facilitate such changes. Value systems, on the other hand, tend toward rigidity under such conditions. It is in this respect that Theresa's uniqueness shows itself. Her own personal growth while at MYC is evident from a reading of her thesis. There, she talks of being confronted with the disparity of her own values and attitudes and those of the inner-city youths she was working with. The logical culmination of her desire to comprehend the underlying motivations of inner-city inhabitants was the holiday visit she made to a black ghetto family. The retelling of that Christmas at M.'s is, to me, the high point of Theresa's thesis.

Attitude change is a risky business. Theresa Jones admits that her visit to M.'s family was a major contributing factor to her resignation--for at least two reasons. That the Ohio Youth Commission forbids its employees such off-camp contacts with relatives of the children committed to its institutions was secondary to the fact that

the insight she so gained demonstrated the counter-productivity of the Mohican Youth Camp and its fellow institutions.

Theresa failed to mention the most profound danger that accompanies openness to change. If an individual is willing to put his or her value system on the line, as Theresa clearly did, that person must also be willing to forsake all the things once held as irrefutably sound. Theresa's involvement with M. and his family was no academic inquiry; it was a quest in the boldest sense. The outcome is manifest. She sold her secluded hillside home--the most beautiful private residence I've ever been in--and now lives in a tiny three-room apartment in Detroit's inner-city. Surroundings of dense virgin forest and undisturbed wildlife are no longer a part of her life. Instead, her kitchen window overlooks a concrete terrain and the remains of the '67 riots. She works in the local public library where drugs, hunger, and violence are part of the daily routine. On Christmas of 1972, Theresa put everything on the line. If you'd ask her about it today, she'd tell you she came out "winners."

Theresa's catchword is not "change;" her catchword is "ideas." Ideas, of course, can bring change--that's the crux of education--but the one truth in Theresa's life is the power of ideas. By demonstration, the boys that entered her library got hooked on ideas. That's the healthiest addiction I can imagine.

My fourth and final contact with the system came just three days before I began my employment. I received word that the librarians from each of the OYC institutions would be meeting on Friday for their quarterly meeting. This one was being held in the library of the Cuyahoga Hills Boys School near Cleveland, and I was invited to attend.

The day was beautiful for driving; I was wearing the new pair of shoes I'd needed for months; I was ready to greet the world. I wasn't ready for the Cuyahoga Hills Boys School. MYC exudes a kind of open warmth that eases through its sylvan setting as you approach the grounds. CHBS, on the other hand, looks exactly like a prison. It catches the eye from perhaps a mile away, its function clear. No trees obstruct the view of its high brick façade or its unending security fences.

CHBS houses a much greater number of boys than does MYC, and its library is comparably larger. The library shares one wing of the huge single building with the classrooms. The thing I remember most vividly of the meeting was that the library door was kept locked during the entire day. No one could get in or out without the key the librarian kept in her pocket. There was one restroom in the library which "belonged to" the librarian. The women at the meeting were permitted use of it. I was not. When I asked her where I might find one, the librarian said she would have to take me there. She unlocked the door, we stepped into the hall, and she locked it behind us. There were two or three other doors that had to be unlocked, passed through, and then relocked behind us. We finally did find a men's room, which had to be, naturally, unlocked. I was slightly surprised at being allowed to enter unaccompanied. We finally made passage back to the library, where the meeting was resumed. I'd never found a trip to the bathroom to be quite so impressive a production and felt just a bit unnatural for this "weakness of the flesh."

The meeting, on the whole, was quite uneventful. I could discern no planned agenda for the day's business. At one point copies of a letter sent to the Ohio Youth Commission were distributed and

discussed at length. I'm not certain of its author; the signature simply reads "From: OYC Librarians." Apparently the letter came out of the previous quarterly meeting. My copy of that letter can be found in Appendix B of this thesis. Section III of that letter presents a broad policy statement of the OYC libraries. It reads in part: "The library is supportive of the educational program. This is the prime responsibility for library service in the Youth Commission libraries." The statement goes on to acknowledge that the libraries have at least a few other responsibilities.

Also included in that letter are lists of long- and short-range objectives. Much of the Friday meeting was spent in deciding who would be responsible for each of the "Objectives for calendar year 1973." Who, for example, would "prepare two articles, for the Ohio Youth Commission newsletter, relating to the library program in the institutions; and to have included in this newsletter announcements of events, meetings, programs, etc."

Some time was devoted to a discussion of the book Night of the White Bear by Alexander Knox. In light of its high critical acclaim, I was surprised that, in addition to me, only two of the, perhaps, twelve in attendance had read the book, particularly because it had recently appeared on numerous young adult book lists as a highly recommended adventure story. Most, in fact, weren't even familiar with the title.

The book was brought to the meeting's attention because one of the women who had read it had found a passage to her distaste. The main character, an Eskimo, has two wives--a long Eskimo tradition, it is explained, because of the shortage of men in the culture. Basic survival skills are not taught to the women of the tribe, so a marital status of "single" is tantamount to certain death by the elements.

One page of the book illustrates not only that the three share a common bed, but that the husband makes love to each of his wives in the other's presence. The limits of decency were overstepped by the fact that the two women are sisters. That this, too, is part of the marital customs of the culture made no apparent difference. The offensive page was passed around the table for the group to read, and it was quickly decided that the book was "inappropriate" and should not be ordered. Theresa had warned me that there were "forbidden titles"--among them the works of Iceberg Slim, a unanimously favorite author of the boys.

The group's decision in regard to Knox's book was a relatively minor event. OYC libraries wouldn't suffer tremendously from its absence. The book is an excitingly written account of a rarely seen world, but I felt I could live without it. Frankly, Nanook of the North, the 1921 film by explorer-director Robert Flaherty, with its documentary impact is, to my tastes, a far more enlightening study of a remarkably similar situation. (Nanook, as I recall, also had two wives--and sisters, as well.)

What frightens me is the underlying impetus for such a decision. To me it betrayed an unwillingness to accept cultural differences, or worse, to even acknowledge the existence of another culture. That may be an acceptable trait in a society page editor, but it doesn't belong in a Youth Commission librarian. I was also stunned to see supposedly professional librarians condemn a book after reading a single page. I wondered at the time if such practice would meet with the standards of the forthcoming selection policy called for under "Objectives for calendar year 1973."

The morning session ended about one o'clock, and we unlocked our way to the cafeteria for lunch. The room, unlike its MYC counterpart, was huge and institutional. I was the last in line, next to one of the few young librarians at the meeting. She and I had just struck up a conversation when a small group of boys got in line behind us. We all started talking as we were getting our food, and as we walked from the serving line, we asked the three or four boys if they'd like to sit with our group. They said they would, and we all started toward the long table against the far wall where the others were just sitting down. As we approached, the hostessing librarian jumped from her seat, hurried over to us, and pointed at the ground. I looked down and saw that we were just about to step over a line that had been drawn on the floor, separating this one table from the others in the cafeteria. She demanded to know why the boys had dared cross the line into the forbidden territory. The young woman tried to explain that the boys had been invited to join us, but the other interrupted that they certainly should have known better than to accept. She shooed them away and sat down, relieved that she'd managed to hold the bastion one more day. It was the first example I saw of the double binds with which incarcerated children must continuously contend. The single most effective defense, and the one eventually adopted by nearly all the boys I got to know, is withdrawal. Earlier that morning we'd spent some time talking about "how we can get kids into the library." The woman's action at lunch was a flawless illustration of how we can keep them out.

The afternoon meeting amounted to little more than a bitch session--lost books, torn books, dirtied books, overdue books--every-

thing but unused books. At one point, the hostessing librarian pulled a volume of World Book off the shelf and opened it to a memorized page, across which was scrawled a four-letter word of Anglo-Saxon origin. Its effect on her sense of propriety was matched in magnitude only by my wonderment at her detective abilities. She'd just discovered it, we were told, the day before. She must have been hunting all week.

The comic relief for the day came with her description of how the boys surreptitiously communicate with each other by writing secret messages in library books. Her conspiracy theory included even codes. I wondered if perhaps the message had really been intended for her. Who else, after all, had either the inclination or the time required for such a monumental hunt.[1] Only the encoder could say for certain.

Theresa's library had been a forum for the exchange of ideas: this one seemed to be a repository for the preservation of privileged information--a holy of holies to be defended against all intruders. Locked doors, over-concern for materials, under-concern for people--timeless examples of why so many libraries are dying slow (and unnecessary) deaths.

Those are characteristics of a library that doesn't belong in the twentieth century. During a two-year stint as a reference librarian at the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, I had begun to formulate a personal philosophy of library service--a notion of what the contemporary library should be. Besides it's more traditional roles of providing academic assistance and leisure reading, the library ought to be helping people solve life problems, beginning with the

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[1]Her professional training in search strategy, of course, would have lightened her load considerably.

most basic--procuring housing and employment, locating appropriate social services, gaining knowledge of useful consumer information--in broad terms, defending oneself from the onslaught of an ever more complex society.

Implicit in this widening of scope is a shift to a new clientele, referred to in library literature as the "unserved." My decision to enter the Department of Library and Information Services was based largely on its emphasis on service to the traditionally unserved--racial and ethnic minorities, the aged, the young, the institutionalized--those people for whom the power of information might radically improve their quality of life.

My intention in accepting the position at MYC was to provide this kind of life support service to the boys. I would maintain the more conventional services (leisure reading and academic and therapeutic support for the boys, current awareness information for the staff), of course, but I planned, above all, to teach the kids that information is power. I saw this as a two step process.

First, I would have to show that no problem is without a solution. In this regard, I hold with the verse from Ecclesiastes that states: "There is no new thing under the sun." If a boy should have a problem that he couldn't contend with, I would show him that somewhere at some time, some one was having the same problem and was solving it. Today, more than ever before, community services are being designed to help people cope. The trick is to identify the problem, decide what's needed, and then locate information in the community that will lead to the appropriate service.

The second step in this educative process would be to show that if a boy could begin solving problems, he would have the means to control his own life. If a boy is born into second class status, he needn't spend his entire life as a second class citizen. Socio-economic mobility can be a reality. Robbery needn't be the only means of acquiring the material goods that American television commercials seem to promise. In short, that he can live "the good life" within the law.

My plans, as the reader has probably already guessed, never got off the ground. My philosophy of library and information services has come through the experience unchanged. A few public library systems across the country (Detroit Public, for example) are moving in the direction of total community service, and it's beginning to work. But it can only work well with community support. When segments of the community are not willing to co-operate, when similar social service agencies view themselves as rivals and consequently attempt to withhold information, when local media don't dedicate themselves to getting information to the total community, when governmental agencies are unnecessarily secretive about huge masses of information (officially or unofficially), the system breaks down. Only the free flow of information will yield positive results.

The institutional setting, almost by definition, denies this free flow. Everything in the MYC community is restricted, information in particular. The boys' simplest questions often go unanswered for weeks. All problems are overridden by the one monumental question: "How do I get out of here?" to which there's no real solution. Running is certainly no solution. Staying seems an illogical solution. "Stick around and learn to play the man's game. Don't withdraw from

the staff, but don't 'hang'. Don't avoid your peers, but don't get tight with any of them, either. Just wait until some one has the shimsical notion that it's time for you to be released."

How do you teach a boy to take positive control of his own life when he can control nothing. He's offered no choice. His options are to do what some one else tells him to do or to misbehave. Seeing that it's his only way out, he'll eventually decide to do whatever others tell him. Difficulty arises when he gets the inevitable conflicting demands. Learning to cope with these is the essence of "playing the man's game." When a boy becomes skillful at this, he's only a step away from being an institutionalized personality. He will finally have found an environment with which he can cope, in which he feels even comfortable. Being fed, housed, and clothed is enough to call a life. Freedom becomes an easy sacrifice to make. Raping younger boys becomes an acceptable sexual option. And a human being is lost.

Being committed to an institution is a full-time job. Coping with that leaves no room for anything else. The boy quoted at the beginning of this chapter knows the score. You're either committed or you go on living your life. There's no correlation between the two. You can't work on improving your life when it's locked outside, waiting for you to resume it. A report prepared by the American Friends Service Committee tells the same story. That report refers, on the whole, to adult correctional institutions, but most of its comments are equally applicable to juvenile:

> Where "progressive penology" rules, the changes are trivial when measured against the magnitude of penal coercion's human cost. We submit that the basic evils of imprisonment are that it denies autonomy, degrades dignity, impairs or destroys self-reliance, inculcates authoritarian values, minimizes the likelihood of beneficial interaction with

> one's peers, fractures family ties, destroys the family's economic stability, and prejudices the prisoner's future prospects for any improvement in his economic and social status. It does all these things whether or not the buildings are antiseptic or dirty, the aroma that of fresh bread or stale urine, the sleeping accommodations a plank or an innerspring mattress, or the interaction of inmates takes place in cells and corridors ("idleness") or in the structural setting of a particular time and place ("group therapy").[2]

Mohican Youth Camp is, without question, one of the more humane, progressive juvenile correctional institutions in the country. Howard James' Children in Trouble testifies to that. But good intentions are of little consequence. The point is that it's an institution and is therefore prone to all institutional indecencies. Chapter I, I believe, begins to illustrate that.

One question, then, remains: What went on in the MYC library during the four months of my employment there? Did I supply a service sufficiently valuable to justify the salary I was paid out of taxpayers' money?

Boys occasionally came to the library with homework, and I offered all the help our collection allowed. Very few out-of-class assignments were required of them, however. The teachers were doing well if they could get the boys to work during class time. From time to time teachers would bring their classes to the library during their regular periods to do some research. The English teacher often did so, and with good results. She was clearly one of the better teachers at MYC, due, in part, to careful preparation. She always gave me advanced word of her visits, explaining what she had planned for the class and

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[2]American Friends Service Committee, Struggle for Justice: A Report on Crime and Punishment in America (New York: Hill and Wang, 1971), p. 33.

allowing me time to prepare. Her classes came ready to work and spent most of their time industriously.

The Industrial Arts teacher, on the other hand, seemed to delight in surprise visits. A group of twenty boys would burst into the library (often without the teacher) and all shout, "I've got to write a 150-word paper on arc-welding!" I doubt that the average industrial library could supply twenty different sources on the basics of arc-welding. Our little library certainly couldn't, and the sharing of books has a limit. Those visits were pure madness, but we usually muddled through. I was eventually able to enlighten the teacher about the limits of our collection. After that, his classes showed up with at least a couple of topics to choose from.

One real problem was the wide range of reading abilities represented among the boys. Some were reading at grade level; others were functionally illiterate. Most fell somewhere in between. Finding material on a certain subject was one thing; finding appropriate material written at the appropriate reading level was another. This difficulty must exist in every school library across the country, including college and university libraries, but at MYC it was the rule rather than the exception. When our collection couldn't fill the bill, I could usually find something at the small library in Loudonville, which I passed on my way home from work. This additional source also helped out in areas of current interest (parapsychology, in particular) which were sparsely represented in the MYC collection. I got to know the head librarian there and could usually talk my way out of the inevitable fines.

But all this talk about supporting the educational program avoids the real issue. The academic fact of life at MYC is that the school program is a sham. The principal is not to blame; the teachers

are not to blame. Most are serious, dedicated, knowledgeable professionals. The school is beautifully equipped with individual learning centers, video-tape equipment, and all the other technological aids. But none of it makes any difference. To repeat, and I'll try not to say it again, commitment to the institution is the only significance. "Everything else [is] a bunch of mumble-jumble." The living child is locked outside. There are no schools in limbo.

And I'm back to the question: "What went on in the MYC library . . . ?" As a generally rational adult, I'm not plagued with too many moments of self-deception, and it didn't take lone to realize all the things the library couldn't be. It also didn't take long to see that the library had the potential for being one very good thing--a singularly "real" environment in an unreal situation--an environment, unlike isolation cells and thirty-man dormitories, which has a familiar equivalent on the "outs." The playing field may be a similarly "real" environment, but it's burdened with the characteristic of constant competitiveness. The classroom is the other familiar environment, but its need for structure makes it less than congenial. The library alone had the potential for being a place for the boys to see themselves as useful and productive, a place for them to enjoy, a place to call their own, and a place open enough to encourage mutual trust. The only answer I can give Ohio taxpayers is that I spent four months trying to make it those things.

The first thing I was asked to do when I started working was to inventory the collection. About 30 percent of the books on the shelves had been transferred from the now defunct traveling library collection of the State Library. Those books had been put on the

shelves without being accessioned or catalogued, and I was assigned that wearisome task. (Minimum Standards for Ohio Junior High Schools requires that all titles be classified and catalogued.) The first step was to identify the unaccessioned titles, and that meant doing inventory. At least it was an opportunity for familiarizing myself with the collection. Since inventory goes about five times as fast with two instead of one, I got some of the boys to help out during their various free periods. Working with them on the task gave me a rough idea of their reading abilities. Some of the boys found it nearly impossible to read even three-digit numbers. Occasionally we'd come to titles that interested the kids and we'd take time to talk about them. (My secret motive, of course, was to get the boys curious enough to read them, and sometimes it worked.) In any case, I learned something about their interests during the process, and quite a bit about the boys themselves.

The principal thought we should delay opening the library to regular, full-time use until inventory was finished, so most of the first few days were free of interruptions. Occasionally we'd take a five-minute break from the tedium of inventory and pour ourselves a cup of coffee from the percolator I'd been given "for staff use in the library." The kids could always get coffee during mealtime in the cafeteria, but the idea of sitting down with a staff member in the middle of the afternoon and drinking coffee from a real mug seemed to make the library a very special place. The boys who helped me out with inventory quickly developed a strong attachment to the library. Most asked if they could be assigned to work in the library, just as some of the others were assigned to the kitchen and the laundry. I

never succeeded in getting such a position pushed through, but those boys continued to be among the most regular library users. If there were some apparatus for giving every boy on camp that kind of real involvement in "behind the scenes" library operations, I think all their attitudes toward the library would be boosted and their use of it would increase.

Actually, a great number of the boys developed a helping attitude toward the library. Once some one had mastered the simple check-out procedure we used, he was usually anxious to explain it to the unenlightened. Although no one got in trouble for having overdue books, we did stamp a two-week due date in the back. When books came up due, guys would usually remind each other that it was time to get them back. The entire circulation system was effectively run with little involvement on my part at all.

I was also pleased when I'd see a boy explaining the intricacies of the card catalogue to others. Several boys assumed the role of keeping the place ship-shape--windows cleaned, furniture polished, coffee pot washed--and all unsolicited. They clearly liked the idea of being productive participants, and I appreciated their help. My desk was always the sloppiest part of the library, and the guys were always at me to "clean it up or you'll never find anything!" They were right, of course.

When ordering time came around, I had even more help. Money is doled out quarterly. Since the library had been shut down the last time around, it had missed one funding period. Consequently I was granted a healthy budget to make up the slack. I mentioned to some of the guys that I was about to select materials for the library and

suggested that they make some recommendations. For the next week they pored over selection aids of every description--school catalogs, publisher's catalogs, film catalogs, record catalogs--even reviews in Library Journal. They'd take them back to the dorms in the evening and return them the next day, along with a list of suggested purchases. We'd then get together and talk their choices over. I explained that a lot of our purchases would have to be for school support, and described the "holes" I'd run across in the collection. Together we arrived at a pretty well-balanced order. And everyone seemed to be happy with it--primarily, I think, because we'd all pitched in.

A few times when students were having particular problems on a classroom assignment, the teachers would send them to the library for individual help. Often they resented the fact that they'd been singled out, and therefore refused help at the library. When it came to a standoff, I'd usually ask the boy if he'd put the assignment aside for a minute and help me out with something (perhaps hang a poster or move some boxes--whatever I could think of). Once he got back to work, he'd generally ask for help on the problem. An even trade with no lost pride.

But for the most part, whenever guys came to the library it was to enjoy themselves. Some of the staff made it clear to me that they felt it was an improper role for the library to play. Fortunately, none of them were in positions of authority. Besides, I thought taking the pressure off the boys for, perhaps, half-an-hour a day was sufficient justification. The source of their displeasure was, I imagine, the presence of some audio-visual equipment that, today, is an integral part of most school libraries--8mm projector, tape

recorder, record player, etc. There certainly could be no complaints of library inactivity. The movie projector didn't even know it had an "off" position. All our films were strictly for entertainment. The kids got enough educational movies in their classrooms. Favorite themes were gangsters, monsters, and boxing matches, in direct alignment with their folk heroes--Dillinger, Dracula, and Muhammad Ali. The boys were clearly children of American television. If nothing else, the films provided us with illustrative material for a couple of bull sessions on the attractiveness of depicted violence.

The record player and tape recorder were probably as popular as the movie projector. We had some recorded poetry, but that never caught on. Rock and soul were their only real musical interests (a shortcoming I share). Fortunately, one of the guys I was sharing a house with had some terrific recording equipment, so I was able to make some good quality tapes for the kids from my own record collection.

The only problem with music in the library was noise. The remedial reading lab was housed beneath the library, and occasionally we'd get a call asking us to turn the music down. We had a listening center in the library, which was some help. This bit of equipment had jacks for about eight headphones, and when the record player was hitched to it, the sound emanated only from those. This, however, was only a partial solution. When a real rocker came on the record, we'd have a group dancing and stomping around in complete musical silence. Although the sight was a constant source of amusement, the noise they caused was just as disturbing to the people beneath us as was the music. And since all the boys had headphones on, they were deaf to everything but the music they alone could hear. Some one would have

to go over to them, lift off the headphones, and tell them to cool it.

I complained often to the guys that they weren't very discriminating in their musical tastes. One of my pet peeves was "bubble-gum rock," and many arguments arose over current examples of it. When I'd ask why they liked a particular song, they could only answer, "'Cause it's bad!" or "'Cause it's cold!" (Expressions of praise, which took some adjusting to.)

Since they couldn't verbalize why a particular piece of music appealed to them, I set out to instill in them the rudiments of critical appraisal--at least in regard to music. There was always the chance of transference to other areas,,but for starters I decided to stick to a universally attractive medium.

So we had mini-seminars on music. Nothing planned or scheduled or regular--just spontaneous "bull" sessions. It wasn't the most efficient way to go about it, and maybe I should have tried to form a kind of music appreciation group, but at the time I steered away from anything that hinted of school. I wanted the library to be free-wheeling.

We talked about change and innovation, origins and derivation. The Beatles were a very important event in the history of modern music. From foundations of early rock-and-roll, country and western music, and Southern blues, they created an entirely new possibility. While still developing, it was called the Liverpool sound, but it soon outgrew any attempts at regional description. It easily incorporated both South American and Eastern musical traditions. The Beatles' development represented a very exciting period for me, and I hoped to show the boys

why. To my amazement, most were entirely unfamiliar with the group. Many had heard the name, but their music was ancient history. I tried to revive some of it, but without much success.

I decided to try another approach. Marvin Gaye, a black singer, was currently popular with the boys. In my opinion, he was as important in the area of soul music as the Beatles had been to white rock. In early 1973, he released a single entitled "What's Goin' On?"—a recording that changed the whole direction of Black music. Some music critics refer to it as the advent of "Black Impressionism." I think even Débussy would agree with the use of the term. Heavily influenced by the Beatles' experimentation, Marvin Gaye freed black music from the tight confines of the Motown sound. This example worked with the boys. Several mentioned that it was a different kind of song to dance to. They discovered new and varying rhythms, unusual instruments, and a change in the use of studio equipment.

In my judgment, soul music took the lead from rock in early 1973, due, in large, to Marvin Gaye's efforts. Songs of innovation and brilliance were being written and produced by primarily black musicians. White sounds, for the most part, became dull and expressionless. The new "heavy" groups—players of "acid" rock and "metal" rock--tried compensating by multiplying the decibel level and making inane repetition its own justification. I had many adversaries on this point, but at least we were beginning to talk about the "why" of music. I admitted that it was largely a matter of taste--that many critics of contemporary music had valid reasons for liking the "heavy" sound. The next step, therefore, was to bring in some outside opinion. I began taking my copies of the music magazine "Rolling Stone" to the

library, and we started to read some of the record reviews. The magazine was immediately in tremendous demand, but I decided I could only afford to buy two copies a month. "Phonograph Record" is a "Rolling Stone" imitation. I'd call it second-rate, but it's a young publication and improving. Because costs of the magazine are paid for by record distributors and wholesalers, copies are given away free. Most record stores have piles of the latest publication. Every time a new issue came out, I'd grab a stack and bring them in.

Soon after the "Rolling Stone"/"Phonograph Record" craze began, the principal said to me (half in jest and with a tiny smirk on his face), "The Chaplain tells me you're supplying the boys with 'underground newspapers!'" I described the magazine and told him of our excursion into the area of "critical judgment." There was really no problem. The principal, being a rational man, accepted the justification. Besides being rational, I found him to be a good administrator, a concerned principal, and a pretty decent guy. We both laughed and the incident was over.

At another point, I donated my collection of "Mad" magazines to the library--about twelve years' worth. Its popularity outstripped even that of "Rolling Stone." There was no doubt that the boys would read if the content motivated them. Joke books and books of riddles were popular. Several of the boys enjoyed collections of contemporary Black poetry. We even had a few budding Black poets at the camp. Dictionaries were well used, and not just by our poets. New words held a strange fascination for nearly all the boys. I was sorry that the library budget wasn't large enough to supply each with his own pocket dictionary--an idea first suggested in Daniel Fader's Hooked on Books. Anything with word lists was devoured. For some reason, the

library had five hard-back copies of Roget's International Thesaurus. Once I explained how to use it, it became as popular as the dictionary. One thing that was needed was a rhyming dictionary for the poets. Next to the dictionaries in popularity was Guinness Book of World Records. We ordered several paperback copies to help meet the demand.

The only newspaper we received at the library was the small one from the local town. I fought the entire time I was there to get daily copies of all the major Ohio newspapers. I thought the newspapers, if I would write to them, would probably send us free copies as a kind of public service. It wouldn't matter if they arrived a few days late, as long as the boys could keep up on what was happening back home. I made the big mistake of mentioning my intentions to the director of the camp. He told me not to do it myself, but to let him handle it. About two weeks later I asked him if he'd heard anything from the newspapers. He said, "Gee, I forgot all about it." He asked if I'd get him a list of the papers and who to write to. That night I stopped at the local library and got the addresses of the seven big dailies in Ohio out of Ayer's. A couple of weeks later I asked again if he'd had any reply to his letters. He said he'd decided we should wait until the next quarterly budget period arrived and then just subscribe. We did, but it took a huge chunk out of the library budget (nearly $400, as I recall). I left MYC before the first papers arrived, so I don't know what kind of use they got.

One evening while rummaging through some old things, I came across a puzzle I'd had for years. The object was to form a checker board design out of about sixteen odd-shaped pieces, and after more than fifteen years, I'd never been able to do it. The next morning

I took it into the library and set it on one of the tables. Someone eventually brought it to me and asked what it was. When I'd explained it to him, he asked, "What'll ya give me if I can do it?" I assured him that he probably couldn't, but finally said, "O. K. Two bucks in your commissary." He worked on it diligently for a while, but eventually conceded and handed it to some one else to try. Over a period of weeks, nearly every guy on camp gave it a go. Then one day two little kids I'd never seen before walked into the library with the puzzle solved. As the kids would say, I was blown away. The two said they'd heard there was a two-dollar prize, and since they'd worked on it together, they decided they should split it. I stopped by the commissary after work and paid my debt. The next day the two showed up asking for another puzzle. We got out the Scrabble board instead.

For weeks the Scrabble game hadn't been noticed, and then suddenly some one discovered it and made it a library pasttime. Nearly everyone learned how to play, and some of the guys became experts. I wouldn't have stood a chance.

During one game, A. scored a phenomenally high point value on one move. So proud was he that he decided to post his name and score on the wall to give others something to shoot for. The score was never bettered, but soon the wall was covered with all sorts of personal successes. Besides drawings of the librarian, we had original poetry, hand-drawn cartoons, accomplishments of every description. There were even articles, written by some of the guys, that had been published in the local town's newspaper. Works from art class appeared, and there was an official display of things that had been crafted in Industrial Arts. The boys' notion that the library belonged to them

pleased me. A couple of times they even decided to do some rearranging of furniture.

One special feature of the library is its rest room. Actually, there are two. One is off the workroom in the back, and is consequently the librarian's "john." The other is in the library proper and belongs strictly to the boys. It's unique in that of all the boys' "johns" on camp, only this was designed for individual use. The others have rows of open commodes lined against a wall. They were constructed with observation in mind--even those in the school. When the door is opened upon entering, the entire area can be seen from the hall. Because of the constant passage of female teachers and secretaries through the hall, sitting on the "john" can be fairly embarrassing for the guys. The private "john" in the library is therefore well appreciated. Boys respect each other's privacy and always knock before entering.

Besides its regular function, the library "john" was the perfect place for something else--"sneak smoking." The guys were permitted to smoke all they wanted at meals and in the dorms, but during school hours, smoking was strictly forbidden (except for free period, which was spent in the dorms). I only knew three or four guys out of 120 that didn't smoke, and going without a cigarette all day was pretty tough for most, especially when many of the teachers smoked in front of them during class. So a lot of the boys took advantage of the private "john" to catch a quick smoke. I was given clear orders that only members of the staff could smoke in the library, so I was in something of a bind. I told the guys simply that I would never go in their "john." If they wanted to sneak a smoke, that was their own

business. There was some risk involved because a vent blew any smoke from the "john" out of the building, where it could be seen by passing staff members. I let the guys know that if anyone came down to question the smoke, I wouldn't cover for them. They'd have to deal with the problem themselves. That only happened a couple of times and I just told the inquiring staff member (the same one both times) that I wasn't a "john" monitor and didn't know anything about it. Being a smoker myself, I was sympathetic with the boys' dilemma. I often left my cigarette burning in an ashtray on the circulation desk, and its use (in case of emergency) was understood.

One common practice among staff members at MYC is the utilization of the library as a reward. Using the library as an excuse to get out of work in the dormitories is obviously not cool. But if a boy's work is done, or if it's a free period, there should be open access to the library. In addition to undermining the notion that the library belongs to the boys, the idea of making library usage some sort of gift or reward is repulsive to my sensibilities. Access to libraries is a human right, and I struggled against any practices at MYC that refuted that concept.

Despite repeated warnings to the contrary, I found the kids to be remarkably trustworthy. Part of my unofficial orientation to MYC included hearing horror stories from the past--cars being "hot-wired" in the parking lot, for example. About a week into my job I got a call from the administration building about locking my car. At the time I was driving a junker--the kind no one would want to steal--so I was in the habit of never locking it. I was warned that these guys are pros at starting cars without keys, and I promised the voice on

the phone that I would remember to keep it locked while it was parked on camp. But that presented a new problem. In the past, whenever I'd left something in my car that I'd intended to bring down to the library, I could just ask one of the guys to run up and get it for me. Now that I was locking my car, I had to give them the keys to get in and remind them to lock it back up again to insure against theft. I'm sure that if a staff member had ever seen me give my keys to one of the guys, I would have had the devil to pay, and I assume the guys were pretty cagey about running errands to and from the parking lot for me. The thought that the boys would betray my trust never entered my head, and they never did. A guy would usually walk to the door swinging the keys around his index finger and say something like, "I think I'll take 'er for a little spin through the park." And I usually answered with something like, "Careful you don't run into the administration building." The thing that most of the staff never seemed to learn is that the kids, almost without exception, are exactly as trustworthy as you give them credit for being. If you assume that they're likely to steal your car, they're likely to steal your car.

The boys were equally trustworthy when left alone in the library. If I had to go to the school for something, I'd say to some one, "Keep things cool for a minute, all right?" If anything, things were kept too cool. They tended to assume the authoritarian role they'd learned from the staff and come across like Jimmy Cagney in "Little Caesar."

Efforts at preventing AWOL attempts occupy a large part of the staff's time. Boys moving from place to place are closely monitored. Often they're accompanied by staff members. When they're not, they're

followed by phone: first a call ahead to their intended destination, and then a return call to confirm arrival. Hourly roll call completes the security network. These are awfully unproductive uses of time, and I usually didn't bother. Kids often confided that I made it easy to run, and they were right. But in the four months of my employment, during which there were perhaps eighty or ninety AWOL's, not a single boy tried to run while going to or from the library. The library never figured even vaguely into AWOL attempts. Maybe I just made it too easy to be any fun. I prefer to think it was the influence of a trusting relationship. The guys knew that I might get in trouble with the administration if the library was connected, so we just watched out for each other.

The thing that bothered me most at MYC was the fighting. Guys were constantly being written up and thrown in isolation for punching each other out. I hadn't seen any fights during my first week, but I heard about several. I wondered how I would handle the problem in the library. On Monday of my second week, when I officially opened the doors for business, I hit upon the solution. I just told the guys that there weren't going to be any fights in the library. I said, "I don't like the idea of having to write someone up, so I don't expect to see any fights in here." And there weren't any.

Except one. Things went smoothly for about two months. There were hassles, of course. Kids got upset from time to time and volleyed insulting names, but then one of the other guys would say, "Hey, cool out. We don't want to see any fights in here." and it would be over. But then the Industrial Arts teacher came with his class for the first time. Within three minutes trouble had started. One boy yelled something at another. He yelled back. The first gave the second a shove

and got one in return. And then, like a spring released, the teacher (who still talks of his training in the U. S. Marine Corps) lept onto one of the boys. Shazam! In seconds it went from fight to brawl to melee. Books and chairs flew. A monumental explosion, but a short one, fortunately. It was an incredible thing to see a situation so poorly handled. This is pure conjecture, but my strong feeling was that the teacher wanted not to squelch the fight, but to join in. The man did his little write-up number and left. We never had a second fight in the library.

I know that there were other people on the staff who liked the boys and trusted them. You could see that in little ways. I was fortunate in having a spot of my own, basically free from outside interference, in which we could make mutual trust a rule of thumb.

The kids at MYC need a lot of things in their lives. Most desperately, they need some caring. They often display a shortage of humanity toward their fellow men, but it's difficult to feel human when no one seems to care about you. Upon arriving at work one Monday morning, I heard that L. had been rushed to the local hospital on Friday night with acute appendicitis. I remembered the name, but I wasn't sure who he was. That night after work I decided to pay him a visit. The nurse at the desk gave me his room number. He was doing pretty well, she told me, but he was carrying a mild fever that they couldn't explain. L. and I recognized each other when I walked into his room, although we'd never really met or talked. He thanked me for the cycle magazine I'd brought, and we visited for a while about what was going on back at camp. He was pretty wiped out, and I left so he could get some sleep, promising I'd stop back to see him the next day.

When I returned, he was a very sick boy. His incision was infected, causing the fever, and by now his stomach was terribly swollen. He was in no shape for visitors, so I just said, "Hello," and, "See you later." I stopped by every night after work that week to see how he was doing. On Wednesday morning the doctor reopened his incision and cleaned out the infection. By Saturday he was sitting up and in good spirits. We played some cards, watched some T. V., and kidded with the nurses. It's a small hospital and the staff was giving L. the royal treatment. A fourteen-year old boy with no parents to sit beside his hospital bed had won their hearts. (And one of the young nurses had won his.)

But the MYC staff couldn't be bothered. The camp nurse drove down to see him, of course, but that was part of her job and she could come during working hours. Except for the two of us, L. had not a single visitor. Staff members would ask me how L. was doing and say, "I'll have to stop by and see him," but none ever did.

I had my appendix removed when I was about fourteen, but I can't imagine what it must be like to go through the ordeal in a strange hospital in a strange town, without parents or chums to cheer me along.

During his first week back at camp, L. was excused from classes. A good deal of his recuperation period was spent in the library. He never got to be what you could call a library user, but he came down to visit often. We'd been through a pretty heavy thing together, we'd gotten to be friends, and sometimes it was just good to see each other.

I wonder, sometimes, what real effect, if any, the MYC library under my tutelage had on the boys. In my darker moments, I fear it was nothing more than an escape. I think it's true that sometimes

they needed desperately to escape from the rest of the scene. But too much of their lives has been devoted to escape, rather than to positive action. They ingest drugs and alcohol to escape from the reality of their environment. They run away, they steal a car--all to escape.

But in my brighter moments, I think that perhaps I kept an option open for them. Maybe they'll feel a little better about libraries after helping make one grow. Maybe they'll remember what Theresa was trying to say about the power of ideas. If the profession moves in the direction that it should, libraries may be good things to have around. One day, perhaps, they'll provide the kinds of service that will give people in need the means to change their lives.

I enjoyed my four months at MYC. I even experienced some of the withdrawal pangs that I'd sensed in Theresa. But I made a lot of mistakes while I was there. I didn't try very hard to get together with the teaching staff and co-ordinate our efforts. I should have made the improving of my relations with the staff a high priority. When I would send them current awareness information or ask them what journals in their respective fields they would like ordered, many seemed to feel that I was impugning their professional competence.

My tendency over the weeks was to withdraw from most of the staff more and more. At the end I was avoiding the teacher's lounge as often as possible. Instead of being a place to discuss problems and develop more effective solutions, it became increasingly a gathering place for the exchange of caustic remarks about the boys and the planning of retaliation. When I had to stop in, once a day, to collect the library's mail, I was always careful to leave the door open. The technique was quite successful in quelling the conversation, which ruined their fun. But it saved me the hearing.

I spent far too much time on clerical matters, like cataloguing those infernal gift books from the traveling library. The battle cry of bringing the library collection up to minimum standards clouded my vision. I could have fudged my way through in a quarter of the time, and no one would have been the wiser.

It didn't require much skill or insight to see what was really happening at MYC--cue stick attacks, destruction of boys' property, staff duplicity, excessive use of coercion and regimentation, compounded humiliations--and all under the guise of redirecting delinquent behavior. Oddly enough, the above list might nearly serve as a compendium of the offenses which brought the boys to MYC in the first place. An eye for an eye. Whatever treatment programs a mass-custodial institution like MYC might claim to have or would even like to have, the final effect is punishment in like manner. The day I realized that and saw the futility of any efforts I made to remedy the situation, was the day I handed in my resignation.

In an article on the redirection of criminal and delinquent behavior, Dr. Karl Menninger of the Menninger Foundation insists that the one unconditional requirement for workers in the field is that they "love, not hate. This is the deepest meaning of the therapeutic attitude."[3] I have never experienced this kind of real concern in greater shortage than I did at MYC. Cue sticks and handcuffs are in no way accessories to the caring relationship.

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[3]Karl Menninger, "The Crime of Punishment," Saturday Review, vol. 51 (September 7, 1968), p. 25.

CONCLUSION

Over the past ten years, the rights of children have finally begun to be recognized. The single most dramatic step in this direction was the U. S. Supreme Court's decision in the Gault case (1967).[1] It's important to remember that juvenile cases are heard in civil proceedings, while adults are tried in criminal proceedings with the constitutionally protected rights of due process. Until the Gault case, juveniles weren't guaranteed these same rights. In the Court's words, children were often presented with "the worst of both worlds." Thanks to the Gault decision, juveniles now share the rights of due process:

1. Notice of the charges;
2. Right to counsel;
3. Right to confrontation and cross-examination;
4. Privilege against self-incrimination;
5. Right to a transcript of the proceedings; and
6. Right to appellate review.

In other words, juveniles are entitled to fair treatment in our courts. It was a momentous decision, but much remains to be done.

The Gault decision says nothing about the rights of juveniles after adjudication. Another decision, Morales,[2] handed down last year

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[1] In re Gault, 387 US 1.

[2] Alicia Morales, et al. v. James Turman, et al., Civ. Action 1948 (E. D. Tex., Sherman Div. 1974).

in Tyler, Texas, is of much more relevance to what happens to a child after appointment to a juvenile institution like MYC. Although the case has, to date, been less heralded than the Gault decision, it is perhaps as astounding in its implications to this country's juvenile justice system. On April 30, 1974, federal judge William Wayne Justice ordered that the Texas Youth Council shut down its two major juvenile correctional institutions for boys and replace them with more effective treatment methods. After examining the two training schools and hearing the charges brought against their staffs, he stated in his decision that such institutions "are places where the delivery of effective rehabilitative treatment is impossible . . . The court finds specifically that no reforms or alterations can rescue these institutions from their historical excesses." His findings go on to demand not only more qualified staffing within the Texas Youth Council, but also community-based, non-residential facilities.

The Morales decision is the strongest case to date in defense of the juvenile's "right to treatment," and will inevitably be used as precedent in future cases throughout the U. S. The "historical excesses" at the two Texas Youth Council institutions described in the Morales decision are in no way matched by the actions I witnessed during my sixteen-week employment at MYC. Still, I maintain that "the delivery of effective rehabilitative treatment" is equally impossible at Mohican. I was there and saw with my own eyes that it's not working.

I'm not a professional in the field of juvenile corrections and would not attempt to devise the most appropriate alternatives. There are others trained to make just such recommendations. From my reading of the recent literature in the area of corrections, it

would appear that some type of community-based facilities, both residential and non-residential, is a better way to get children out of the "revolving door" of our present juvenile correctional system. The U. S. Chamber of Commerce writes:

> Experience has shown that, as opposed to isolation and punishment, community-based corrections which permits a person to live in his own community and maintain normal social relationships, while providing control, guidance, and access to rehabilitative resources and services, is a more efficient, economic, and more humane approach to the treatment of the offender. A considerable and impressive body of evidence has been accumulated indicating that corrections in the community is more effective in reducing recidivism than severe forms of punishment.[3]

The taxpayers of Ohio have an obligation to demand a solution to the problem of juvenile crime in their state. The Mohican Youth Camp is no solution.

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[3]Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, Marshaling Citizen Power to Modernize Corrections (n.p., 1972), p. 8.

APPENDIX A

NOTICE OF RESTRICTION AND DISCIPLINE GUIDE

MOHICAN YOUTH CAMP

July 30, 1973

TO: All Staff
Mohican Youth Camp

FROM: Ronald L. Stepanik
Deputy Superintendent

SUBJECT: RESTRICTION PUT ON STUDENTS BY PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Due to the overall poor behavior of the students and general negative attitude the following restrictions has been administered effective July 26, 1973:

I. Class Level Privileges

1. All Class Level Privileges suspended except:

a. Home passes
b. Citizen Haircuts

2. 10:00 P.M. bedtime for all students.

3. No off camp activities of any kind.

II. The restriction is on for a minimum of 30 days. At which time each dorm will be evaluated by Program Directors.

III. Criteria for removal of restriction:

1. Reduction of AWOL S.
2. Greater respect for staff and peers.
3. Overall improvement of behavior and attitude.

Ronald L. Stepanik

Ronald L. Stepanik, Deputy Superintendent

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OHIO YOUTH COMMISSION
MOHICAN YOUTH CAMP

Chapter 11-1
July 26, 1973

TITLE: DISCIPLINE GUIDE

I. NATURE AND PURPOSE

This Directive shall establish guidelines for the discipline of MYC residents by all staff members of this institution.

This Directive does not recognize all forms of discipline related to specific offenses, and staff members are urged to use individual imagination and discretion to effect on-the-spot correction.

The following is simply to serve as an outline for those imposing standard MYC discipline procedures upon camp members.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of any MYC staff member who witnesses or has certain knowledge of an offense to discipline the offending camp member within the guidelines established herein.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

Means of discipline are of varying degree and may be employed separately or in conjunction; however, a camp member should not be disciplined twice for a single offense.

VERBAL REPRIMANDS

A. Verbal reprimands: are simple admonitions to camp members not to repeat an offense. These may be used in conjunction with other forms of discipline and should always precede more severe disciplines. The following guidelines should always be observed:

1. Sarcasm should never be used as a means of reproach.

2. Whenever possible, the offender should be isolated from peers while being admonished.

3. Shouting and cursing are not to be used as a means of reprimand.

4. This (or any other) type of discipline should not be administered by a staff member when angry.

5. If a reprimand causes a camp member to be ashamed of his offense, do not belabor the matter to cause further shame.

6. Subsequent to the reprimand, staff members should attempt to gain a commitment from the offender that he will not repeat the offense.

TASK ASSIGNMENTS

B. Staff members may require a camp member to perform a small task as discipline for a minor offense.

1. In this case, no incident report is necessary although the offender's social worker should be notified of the offense and subsequent discipline.

2. When using this means of discipline, the staff member involved should reach a clear understanding with the offender that failure to perform or properly complete the assigned task will result in issue of a more severe discipline.

INCIDENT REPORTS

C. Incident reports cause the offending camp member's behavior to become a matter of record as they are placed in his permenant file. Staff members may or may not assign discipline with these reports.

1. The Educational Department will make three copies of the report. The offender's social worker will receive the original, Group Life will receive one copy, and the school Guidance Counselor will receive the other copy.

2. Incident reports must be signed by the writer and the appropriate supervisor, department head, or Youth Leader V before they are valid.

a. Offenders <u>may</u> be asked to sign incident reports as certification of their awareness of content and/or concurrence with the discipline given. If an offender is asked to sign and declines, the notation "Refused to Sign" should be added to the bottom of the report.

3. If an incident report is for information, the notation "Information Only" should be placed at the top of the report.

4. When discipline is assigned, the exact nature and extent of that discipline must be specified on an incident report.

5. Incident reports are not valid and no discipline is to be enforced unless they are submitted to the proper areas within twenty-four (24) hours after the cited offense.

6. When a staff member assigns discipline on an incident report, it is his or her responsibility to see that notations of the nature and extent of discipline are recorded on the appropriate Population Control Sheet along with the writer's initials.

   a. If these notations do not appear on the control sheets, the offender is not to be compelled to work off any discipline.

   b. From 8:00 a.m. until 3:10 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays and vacations), the necessary notations can be made on the Population Control Sheets by calling the student's dormitory, if no answer is received, the Group Life secretary. At any other time, the Population Control Sheets will be in the dormitories, and notations are to be made by youth leaders when they administer discipline or receive notification that discipline has been administered elsewhere.

7. No camp member is to receive an incident report without being told:

   a. That he is the subject of an incident report;

   b. Why he is the subject of an incident report; and

   c. What discipline, if any, is being administered.

8. It is good practice to talk with a camp member after writing an incident report on his behavior. Not only does this afford an opportunity to advise the offender of the above conditions, but it provides opportunity to:

   a. Reconcile the not-uncommon animosity that an offender feels toward one who disciplines him for that offense,

   b. Warn the offender that subsequent offenses of that nature will result in similar or more severe discipline; and

   c. Orient the offender toward proper behavior, provide encouragement, and gain his commitment that he will not repeat the offense.

9. Upon an offender's completion of discipline, it is the responsibility of the attending staff member to see that notations of discipline are removed from the Population Control Sheet.

EXTRA DUTY HOURS

D. A maximum of four (4) hours of extra duty may be assigned a camp member, although more than two (2) hours is not recommended unless warranted by the seriousness of habitual nature of the offense. This duty must constitute some form of constructive work.

1. Camp members are to begin and complete extra-duty hours at the earliest possible time with regard to the following stipulations:

   a. NO extra duty may be done after 10:30 p.m. or before 8:00 a.m.

   b. Extra duty may be worked in the dormitories from 3:00 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. on weekdays.

   c. On holidays or vacation days occurring throughout the week, extra duty may be worked from 8:00 a.m. until 10:30 p.m.

   d. Extra-duty hours cannot be worked on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until general dormitory clean-up is completed, and the dormitory inspected.

   e. Extra duty can be done on Sunday, except during chapel services.

2. Camp members are to have privileges suspended until completion of required extr-duty hours and removal of the notations from the Population Control Sheet.

   a. The only exception to the above may be chapel services, religious discussion classes, entire-dorm activities, and visitor passes. These exceptions will be made only at the discretion of the social worker or attending youth leader(s), and the extra-duty hours will remain pending after the activity.

3. If a camp member refuses to work off extra-duty hours, he is to be placed on disciplinary holding status (Sec III-D). When removed from disciplinary holding status, the offender must still complete the required extra duty.

4. Items C-4, C-5, and C-6 preceding should be observed when assigning extra-duty hours, and the hours may not be given in fractions.

5. Extra duty is to be done in the dormitories unless otherwise specified on the incident report and recorded on a Population Control Sheet.

(-4-)

a. Extra-duty assignments in areas other than dormitories are not recommended as this may entail needlessly long suspension of the offender's privileges.

DISCIPLINARY HOLDING

E. Disciplinary holding requires the suspension of all privileges, and during this period of time the offender is sitting on a chair. As this is a major form of discipline, discretion must be utilized in its issuance.

1. Disciplinary holding occurs in the dormitory during the following time periods:

a. Weekdays: 3:10 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

b. Weekends, holidays, and vacations: 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

2. The minimum length of time a camp member is to be on disciplinary holding is one (1) hour, and the maximum length of time is one (1) day.

3. Students on disciplinary holding will be permitted to attend mass or chapel.

4. Camp members on disciplinary holding status will not be permitted to participate in part-time work assignments. When a camp member who holds a part-time job is placed on holding, every effort should be made to notify the supervisor of his part-time duties.

5. <u>If a camp member is placed on disciplinary holding because of refusal to work extra-duty hours, he must still work the extra-duty hours at the completion of his stay on holding</u>.

6. Camp members assigned disciplinary holding may <u>not</u> talk, sleep or leave their chair without permission. Educational studies are permitted.

7. If a camp member will not remain on the holding chair, the on-duty youth leader V is to be called and consulted regarding the situation. If he is still uncooperative, the camp member is to be placed in isolation.

8. Preceding items C-4, C-5, and C-6 must be observed when invoking disciplinary holding.

9. Situations arise which necessitate the placing of a camp member on a chair for a short period of time. This is for the purpose of helping the student regain his composure "cool off" and/or respond to a staff members request. This method is immediate in implementation, less than one (1) hour in duration, and is not subject to III-F 1 thru 9, except 5 where applicable.

RESTRICTIONS

F. Restrictions may be from a particular area or privelege. All restrictions should be used sparingly as they lose constructive value when too frequently employed.

1. Preceding Items C-4, C-5, and C-6 must be observed when invoking restrictions.

2. Camp members will be permitted to attend mass, chapel, and religious discussion classes regardless of the restriction.

3. Camp restrictions require suspension of all activities occuring off institutional grounds except emergency home passes or school and work training functions.

a. Whenever possible, the offender's social worker should be consulted prior to invoking a camp restriction. Visitor passes during the term of the restriction will be limited to on-campus. These restrictions will definitely cancel impending home passes and releases; therefore, it may be necessary for the social worker to notify parents and authorities outside the institution. (See regulations for visitors and home passes.)

b. Camp restrictions of more than two (2) weeks are not recommended, and must be approved by the Group Life Director, Deputy Superintendent of appropriate social worker.

4. Dormitory restrictions require suspension of privileges which would take offenders outside the dormitories; i.e. recreation, commissary, home passes, releases, visitor passes, etc.

a. If a visitors pass has been approved prior to the assignment of the restriction, the restricted ward will be permitted a two-hour, on-camp visitation. (See Chapter 17-1).

b. As in F-3 above, emergency home passes and program related activities are exceptions.

c. No dormitory restriction of more than two weeks may be imposed without the approval of the Deputy Superintendent, Group Life Director or appropriate social worker.

5. When invoking dormitory restrictions, the same considerations as in F-3-a above are absolutely necessary with regard to notification of the social worker.

6. Recreation restrictions preclude any recreational event occuring outside of the dormitories but do not include commissary or full-camp activities.

a. When these restrictions are imposed, the recreation department must be notified.

7. Camp members whose restrictions prevent their participation in full-dorm activities are to be placed in adjacent halls until their dorm returns from an activity.

8. All restrictions are to be for consecutive days and/or weeks.

9. During full-camp activities (such as a mandatory movie) all camp members, except those confined in isolation, are to participate.

10. For R & E "R" suffix restrictions, refer to the appropriate regulations.

G. Should physical force become necessary to restrain a camp member, the participants and witness (es) must fill out an Unusual Incident Report and submit it to the medical department. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST SEE A NURSE AT THEIR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.

Charles L. Rhodes

CHARLES L. RHODES, SUPERINTENDENT
MOHICAN YOUTH CAMP

APPENDIX B

OYC LIBRARIANS' LETTER TO THE OHIO YOUTH COMMISSION, JANUARY 11, 1973

1-11-73

To: Ohio Youth Commission

From: OYC Librarians

Date: January 11, 1973

Re: Library Services in the Ohio Youth Commission

The Ohio Youth Commission librarians met December 18, 1972 at Mohican Youth Camp. This first meeting was organizational, with much discussion as to what the group should do, what programs might it become involved in, and its relationship to the total Ohio Youth Commission.

I

PURPOSE: To provide a vehicle through which the Ohio Youth Commission librarians will be better able to rpovide programs of library service that relate directly to the needs and interests of residents and staff; and contribute to the overall institution goals.

LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES: To establish a communications link among Ohio Youth Commission librarians through regularly scheduled meetings.

To communicate the role of the library in the total institution program to administrators and to staff members in the institutions.

To establish public relations with community (school, public) library services, and encourage participation of Ohio Youth Commission librarians in professional organizations (Library Associations, O.E.A., A.F.T., etc.)

To become more acquainted with librarians and their programs in other institutions in Ohio.

II

OBJECTIVES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1973:

To prepare two articles, for the Ohio Youth Commission news-letter, relating to the library program in the institutions; and to have included in this newsletter announcements of events, meetings, programs, etc.

To develop policies and recommendations relating to Ohio Youth Commission institution libraries.

To plan one in-service program for Ohio Youth Commission librarians involving professional librarians in the community on a non-fee basis.

To identify elements in the development of selection policies; that each institution might have a materials selection policy against which to work.

III

The library in the Youth Commission institution is a basic element of the educational program. It is supportive of the total education efforts, providing materials pertinent to, and supportive of, the curricula; and development of special programs that encourage residents to use library materials, to become more capable readers, and to be aware of the value effective usage of libraries can have for them.

The library is supportive of the educational program. This is the prime responsibility for library service in the Youth Commission libraries.

However, one should not view the library as serving just the school program. It should be a source for educational, recreational, and informational materials for the total institution -- serving those needs and interests of residents not in school programs; and serving the needs and interests of staff in the institution, from superintendent to cottage parent, from amintenance personnel to psychologist. In short, the library should be an information center for residents and staff.

The library should have adequate staffing to permit accessibility to all residents of the institution; and not be limited to just those in the school program. Accessibility can be maintanined through cottage collections, extended hours, released time for residents to use the library, or other suitable arrangements.

The Ohio Youth Commission librarians, in an effort to upgrade the programs of library service, and assure continued development of effective library services, make the following recommendation for your consideration and approval.

1. Provide a system of orientation for new librarians who come into the Youth Commission. Such orientation, aside from normal introduction to the institution, shall include visitations to other institution libraries, where an introducation to the kinds of programs, working with deliquent youngsters, and practical aspects of library service in the Youth Commissi institutions can be effected.

2. Provide a component for orientation of new staff in an institution to the program of library service, as part of the formal orientation programs for new staff members; and periodically include, in on going in-service

programs for staff, a component on library services.

3. Include librarians in staff meetings involving department heads in the institutions. This will keep the librarian abreast of developments in the institution that can effect the library program; and will enable the librarian to be able to communicate library programs, needs, and services to the total institution. Through such involvement, the librarian can maintain a clear picture of resident needs, and of staff needs for information.

IV

Tentative Schedule of Meetings

March 23, 1973	-	Cuyahoga Hills School for Boys
*June 29, 1973	-	Riverview School for Girls
September 21, 1973	-	Maumee Youth Camp
November 16, 1973	-	Training Institution, Central Ohio

*This meeting will be an in-service training meeting and may be relocated.

Librarians attending this first meeting: Mary Cataland, Scioto Village; Marian Minnick, Riverview School for Girls; Theresa Jones, Mohican Youth Camp; Marianna Youngblood, Maumee Youth Camp; Miriam Hawkins, Fairfield School for Boys; and Caroline Farie, T.I.C.O.

Dorothy Hays, Title I, OYC; and Mr. Philip Koons from the State Library were present.

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